SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
ON GENESIS
WITH INTRODUCTORY LESSONS

by

Joelee Chamberlain

2009

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A "Key" to Understanding My Lessons

I have used certain symbols in my lessons as signs to myself as to what is going on and to help me keep my place in the lesson.

*--	shows that there will be a Bible reference to be read aloud by someone in the class. It will also have a question to the woman who read it. I also underline the references that are to be read by the class. (It helps me keep my place.)
---	shows a new question that is to be asked about the same verse. I keep using this symbol.
===	Shows a remark that I will make about that verse, usually some sort of explanation about a person or place. (I always write them out, because (1) I get "carried away" as I write and forget that I'm not talking, and (2) I'm afraid I'll forget!)
**	(1) Within the lesson: after a question this precedes the answer. (I have written the answers to the questions I ask the women to make sure I get it right, too!) (2) At the end of the lesson: precedes the applications of the lessons.
--	At the very beginning or the end of the lesson, precedes each review questions.

Hint: If you have to stop in the middle of a lesson, just put a line by where you will start the next time and write "start" by the line. Otherwise you may forget where you stopped!

P.S. I have put instructions or comments to you, the teacher, in italics.

How I Conduct My Classes

I thought perhaps I should include a little explanation of the way I like to run my classes. You might want to use a similar way for the women in your class.

I have a small class of women (8 to 16), which is a nice size to keep it personal and everyone involved. The way I like to conduct a class is to go through a passage reading it verse by verse and then asking factual questions about the verses *as we go along*. We just go around the circle of women, taking turns reading verses. After a woman has read, I ask her questions on that particular verse. I try to be very careful not to intimidate her. If the woman doesn't seem to know the answer or seems reluctant to speak up, then I just throw the question out to the whole class. I'm certainly not trying to put anyone on the spot or to embarrass anyone. Then I go to the next woman and she reads her verse and answers her questions. And so on around the circle. This method includes everyone (one or two women aren't doing all of the talking), and even more importantly, it keeps them all awake, alert, and listening! I find it amazing how much information can be given sometimes in a single verse -- and how much we can miss if we're not careful!

As we go along in our lessons, I encourage the women to bring up any questions or additions or corrections. After all, this is the women's class, not mine. Also I've told them to ask me to slow down if I start talking too quickly or they get confused. Sometimes we have to stop and review a certain situation, background, or person's life for a few minutes. Review is very important for remembering. Also, I have a set of large maps of the Bible areas and constantly point out the places we're talking about. This seems to be very helpful in keeping down confusion, since a place isn't just a name then. The maps are very nice to have but aren't absolutely necessary. Or you can just use a large piece of paper and draw a simple map and put in the main places.

You may wonder why I have the answers to all of my questions written out. That's simple! I have a very poor memory and get flustered under stress, so I always write out the answers I want from the women, so that *I* don't forget! I also write down any comments I want to make so that I don't forget them.

My booklet of Bible charts contains a chapter by chapter overview and synopsis, "cast of characters", and "list of stories" for each book we've studied. For the possible convenience of you, the teacher, I've included those here for this particular book of the Bible at the end of this little booklet of lessons under "Helps for the Teacher". Use them or not as you like. But if you do use them,.don't try to go faster than the class is able to understand. Take as many sessions per lesson as you need. Just go at a comfortable pace.

These lessons in Genesis date from ones I gave with the Women's Sunday School Class at Grace Bible Church in Escondido in 1994 and 1995 and then have revised and added to them as we went back and went through Genesis again in 2008 and 2009. Some of the lessons have parts that date back to the 1970's when I was teaching the Women's Class at Grace Baptist Church in San Diego.

Now some words of apology. I have gotten these lessons together for the use of a few friends who asked me for them. I had never intended for anyone but myself to see them, and they are pretty much in their original form except for some notes to you which I put in italics. You will find some abbreviations with should be pretty much self explanatory. And remember, I'm not infallible, so you may find actual errors, though I certainly hope not many. I should add that since I have not "polished" these lessons and they are pretty much as I gave them, you may find references to my husband or son or other things of a personal nature. Also, you will find slang language used, since when I get in front of a keyboard, I just let my fingers "talk". But remember, these lessons can either be read, or you can just use them as guides, or you can just throw them out and do your own!

Joelee Chamberlain, 2009

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INTRODUCTORY LESSONS ON THE BIBLE

How the Bible is Put Together

A Simple Outline of the Bible

=== Most of us like to read, but about 500 A.D. (about 1500 yrs. ago) only the priests of the Catholic church could read. The great ruler Charlemagne couldn't read, though he had things read to him. About 1200 A.D. (about 800 yrs. ago) some of the very rich men started learning to read. Then suddenly in about 1500 A.D. (about 500 yrs. ago), suddenly lots and lots of people learned to read and schools were started in some countries for everyone, men and women, boys and girls.

--- Now, why do you think that suddenly so many people were learning to read and were teaching others to read; what made the change? ** the Protestant Revolution came about

--- And what do you think it was about the Protestant Revolution that made this change? ** Protestants knew that the only way that the people could know about God, salvation, and what God wanted people to do, was through the Bible, so they wanted all of the people to know how to read so they could read the Bible for themselves.

=== And the Protestants formed many schools so that children could start reading at an early age, not just as adults.

=== The Protestants:

1) Wanted people to know about God.
2) Wanted people to know the plan of salvation.
3) Wanted people to know what God wants us to do.
4) Knew that the only way to know these things well is found in the Bible.
5) Knew we mustn't take other people's word for what the Bible says.
6) And, therefore, knew that people must know how to read in order to read the Bible for themselves.

=== The answer to these points, what the Protestants wanted, was first of all, (1) to have the Bible in the language of the common people (it was in Latin!), and then (2) to teach adults to read, and then (3) to start teaching children to read. Therefore they formed schools for both boys and girls.

=== I know that this is mostly review, but I like to start at the beginning of something, start where we know things and then work on into things we don't know. So in order to start at the beginning, we are going to review (or maybe even learn!) a little about how the Bible is put together and how to find things in it.

=== First of all, though, I'd like to mention that:

1) The Bible is a History book, the history of man, of the Jews, of God's dealing with man, and of the events leading to our salvation, both our spiritual salvation now, and our future bodily salvation at the resurrection.
2) The Bible is the only source (except Creation itself) that tells us about God
3) The way the Bible is put together was not commanded by God. It was done by man and is an orderly way and is done for a reason. The Jews arrange the books slightly differently than we do.

=== But if we know how it's put together, why it's in the order it is, then we can more easily find things in it and I think the overall picture then makes more sense to us.

=== I use 2 ways of showing how the Bible is put together. The first way is just a simple outline of the Bible. So let's do that now.

Use the chart at the end of this lesson and also in Teacher Helps at the end of the booklet and, if *possible, write it out step by step on a large paper or a black board as you talk.*

=== By the way, I'll be writing the abbreviations "O.T." and "N.T." for "Old Testament" and "New Testament."

--- The Bible is divided into 2 big parts; what are they? ** the Old Testament and New Testament

Write: *I. O.T.*
II. N.T.

=== The O.T. and N.T. are each divided into 3 general parts:

Write: *A.* *A.*
B. *B.*
C.
C.

=== The first and third parts are the same in both the O.T. and N.T.

--- What would the first general part be in each? ** History

Write on each: A. History

--- And what would be the third general part in each? ** Prophecy

Write on each: C. Prophecy

=== The middle parts are different in the O.T. and N.T., though.

--- What is the middle part of the Old Testament? ** Poetry

=== Some people call them the "Wisdom" books.

Write for O.T.: B. Poetry

--- What is the middle part of the New Testament? ** the epistles, letters

Write for N.T.: B. Letters

=== Now, in the O.T., the last section, "Prophecy", is divided into 2 parts.

--- What are these two parts? ** the major prophets and minor prophets

Write under "C": 1. Major
2. Minor

=== And in the N.T., the middle section, "Letters", is divided into 2 parts:

--- What are the two parts of the epistles? ** Paul's letters and other people's letters

Write under "B": 1. Paul's letters
2. other people's letters

=== Now, Paul's letters are further divided into two parts.

--- How are the two parts of Paul's letters? ** letters to churches and letters to individual people

Write: a. to churches
b. to individuals

=== Now for a word of explanation:

1. "Major" and "Minor" prophets means big and little in length (not more important).
2. The prophets in the O.T. are put in chronological order (by date): the Major (long books) prophets are put in chronologically, and then the minor prophets (shorter books) go back and are put in chronologically.
3. "Paul's" and "other letters" are pretty much put in by size, the longest of Paul's (Romans) to the shortest of Paul's (Philemon), and then the longest of "other's" (Hebrews) to the shortest (III John).
4. The history books are where we find most of the stories.

Chart: A Simple Outline of the Bible

OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE

I. Old Testament
  A. History
  B. Poetry
  C. Prophesy
    1. Major
    2. Minor

II. New Testament
  A. History
  B. Letters
    1. Paul's
      a. to churches
      b. to individuals
    2. Others'
  C. Prophesy

Line Chart of the Bible

This is the second way I do it. If you can, get a second piece of big paper or something to draw on, and draw the various things in as you talk. This chart will be included at the end of this lesson and in Teacher Helps at the end of this booklet.

=== Now we're going to do something that I find even more helpful than an outline. It will cover the same things the outline did, but it will show them in a different way. We're going to make a Line Chart. But first, what is a line chart?

=== Just about anything can be put on a line chart. A person's life, perhaps.

Maybe you could do a line chart of your life. Draw a line, then at the beginning put the year you were born and say "born", then put some big event in your life and its date, maybe when you were married. Do a few things like this, and they will catch on to what we mean by a line chart.

=== Or if we had a book of reptiles, we might divide it up on a line chart according to how much it talked about various reptiles: Turtles, Lizards, Snakes, Frogs and Toads, Salamanders

=== Remember, the individual books of the Bible range from a one paragraph letter to a booklet of 75 typewritten pages. Each of these is called a "book". Again, remember that the order that the books are in is not God-given.

Try to ask the questions and draw the chart as they answer.

--- This is going to be a line chart of the Bible, so first, how many books does the Bible have in it? ** the Bible has 66 books

--- How many big parts is the Bible divided into? ** 2

--- What are they? ** the Old Testament and the New Testament

--- Do you know how many books the O.T. has in it? ** it has 39 books

--- Do you know how many books the N.T. has in it? ** it has 27 books

--- What is dividing line between O.T. and N.T.? ** Christ

=== There is a gap between the O.T. and the N.T. of 400 years. Nothing from during that time is recorded in the Bible.

--- Looking at our outline that we just did, into how many parts are the O.T. and the N.T. divided? ** 3 parts each.

--- What is the first part of the O.T.? ** history

=== The O.T. has 17 books of history, and remember, they are put in chronological order.

Draw the brackets large enough to indicate this number and write in "history" and "17". Continue doing this with each part as you go along. (I used a red marker for "history".)

--- What would be some of these history books? ** Genesis, Exodus, etc. all the way up through Esther

--- What is the first part of the N.T.? ** history

--- And how many historical books are there in the N.T.? ** 5

--- What are these history books? ** the 4 gospels and the book of Acts

Put in.

=== By the way, the gospels are put in the order they have because that is the order that tradition says they were written in.

--- What is the 3rd (last) part of the O.T.? ** prophesy

=== The O.T. has 17 books of prophesy at the end of it.

Put in, but leave a little space between the history and prophesy. (I used a blue marker for "prophecy".)

--- What is the 3rd part of the N.T.? ** prophesy

--- There is prophesy here and there in other books of the N.T. but how many books of the N.T.

are strictly prophesy? ** just 1

Leave a good sized gap between them and put in.

=== Then in a sense, the beginning and the end of the O.T. and the N.T. are the same. History is first, and prophesy is last. The middle parts, however, are different.

--- What is the middle part of the O.T.? ** Poetry

--- Do you know how many books of Poetry there are? ** 5

Keep drawing and writing as you talk! (I used a green marker for the middle sections.)

--- And what is the middle part of the N.T.? ** the epistles (letters)

=== And there are 21 letters

--- Now, remember, we said that the prophesy part of the O.T. was divided into 2 parts; what are they? ** the major and minor prophets

=== There are 5 major (big books) of prophets. These are put in chronological order. There are 12 (little books) of minor prophets (though some are fairly long, but that's how they are listed!), and they are put in chronological order.

Put in.

--- The letters or epistles of the N.T. are divided into 2 parts; what are they? ** the letters written by Paul and those written by other people

=== There are 13 letters written by Paul, and they are put in by their length. There are 8 letters written by other men, and they are put in by their length and author.

Put in.

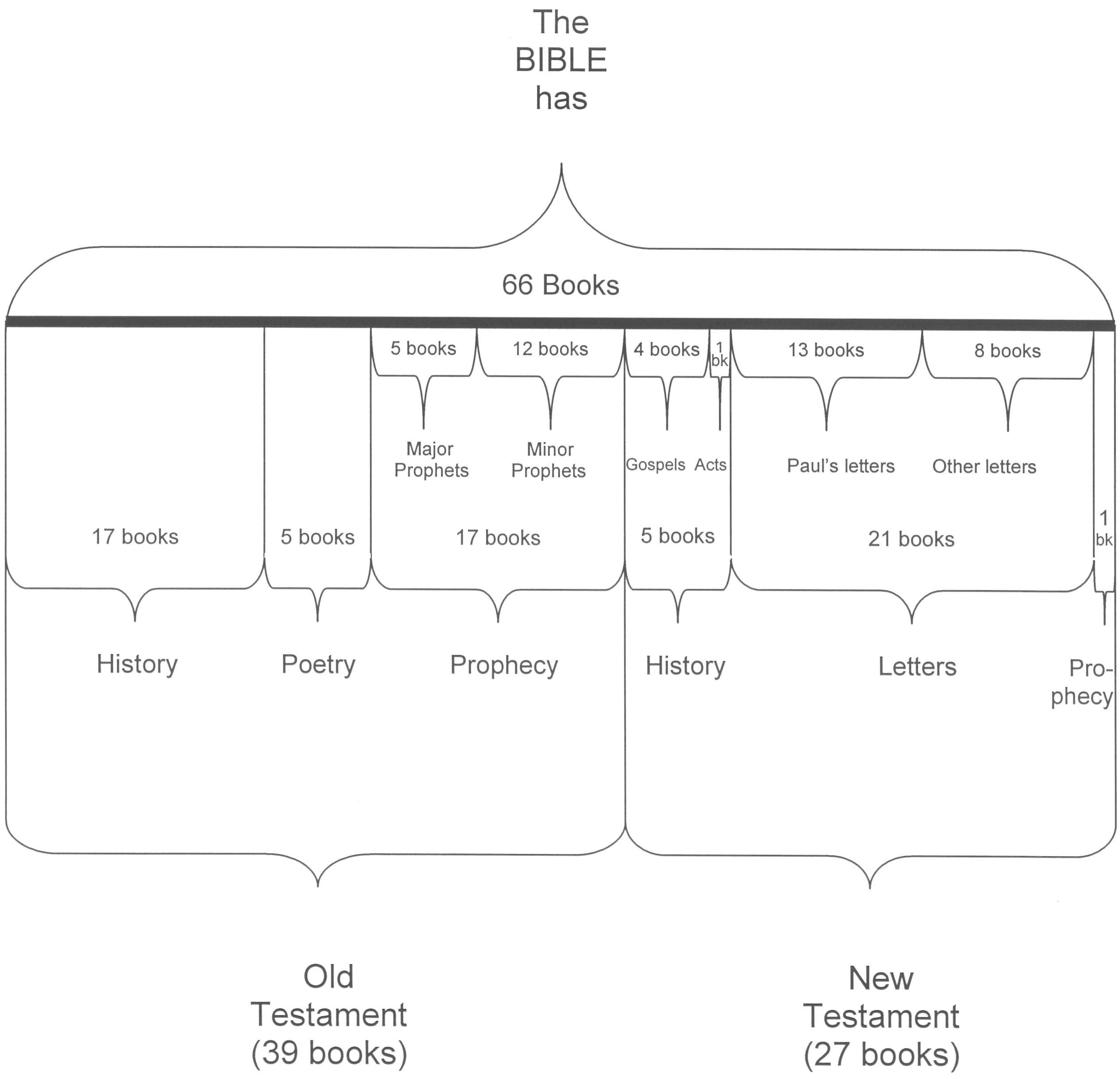
--- And we said that Paul's letters are further divided into those to churches and those to individuals. There are 9 letters to churches (most of these letters end in "-ians"!) and 4 to individuals.

Put in.

Now, at this point if you want to, you can take your Bible (have book marks in ahead of time to make it easier!) and demonstrate how large these sections are. Show them the O.T. and the N.T. -- how much room they each take in the Bible. Then show them how big the history sections of each Testament are in comparison to each other. Then compare the prophecy sections. And then last the middle sections (Poetry and Letters). This isn't necessary to do, but I found it interesting. You may not want to bother, though!

Chart: Line Chart of the Bible

HOW THE BIBLE IS PUT TOGETHER


The BIBLE has
66 Books
5 books
12 books
Major Prophets
Minor Prophets
4 books
1 bk
Gospels
Acts
13 books
8 books
Paul's letters
Other letters
17 books
5 books
17 books
5 books
21 books
1 bk
History
Poetry
Prophecy
History
Letters
Pro-phecy
Old Testament (39 books)
New Testament (27 books)

Adding the Book Names to the Line Chart and Review

If you want to, you might want to go ahead now and ask questions and fill in the books of the Bible underneath the various sections on your Line Chart as you talk. A chart of this is at the end of this lesson and also in Teacher Helps at the end of this booklet. I used red for the History, green for the middle sections, and blue for the Prophecy, but it could all be done in black.

=== Now let's go back and fill this in with the actual books of the Bible.

--- Which books of the Bible would we find under "History" in the Old Testament? ** Genesis through Esther

Though I won't say it each time, just fill in as you get the answers.

--- Which books would be under "History" in the New Testament? ** the 4 Gospels and Acts

--- Which books would be under "Prophecy", "Major" in the O.T.? ** Isaiah through Daniel

--- And under "Prophecy", "Minor" in the O.T.? ** Hosea through Malachi

=== Again, both of these are put in chronologically.

--- Which books would be under "Prophecy" in the N.T.? ** Revelation

=== Though, of course, there is prophecy found in the Gospels and many of the epistles. But the only book that is all prophecy is Revelation.

=== Now, let's go back to where the O.T. and N.T. differ, to their middle sections.

--- Which books would be under Poetry in the O.T.? ** Job through Song of Solomon

--- In the middle section of the N.T., how is it divided? ** into Paul's letters and letters of "others"

--- Which are Paul's letters (that we know for sure)? ** Romans through Philemon

--- And how are Paul's letters divided? ** into those to churches and those to individuals

--- Which of Paul's letters are to churches? ** Romans through II Thessalonians

--- And which of Paul's letters are to individuals? ** I Timothy through Philemon

I just put all of Paul's together and then pointed out the ones to churches and the ones to individuals.

--- And the "others" letters? ** Hebrews through Jude

=== Again, the letters are put in from largest to smallest.

REVIEW:

-- First, into how many big parts is the Bible divided? ** 2

-- What are they? ** O.T. and N.T.

-- Into how many major parts is the O.T. divided? ** 3

-- What are they? ** History, Poetry, and Prophecy

-- Into how many major parts is the N.T. divided? ** 3

-- What are they? ** History, Letters, and Prophecy

-- Which major parts do the O.T. and the N.T. have in common and what are they? ** 1st and 3rd: History and Prophecy

-- Is the order of the books of the Bible given by God? ** no, people put them in their order

-- How did men decide in what order to put the History section in the O.T.? ** Very logically -- in chronological order

-- In what order are the History books in the N.T.? ** First the 4 gospels, telling of the life of Christ, then the books of Acts, telling what the disciples did after Jesus went back to Heaven, so this is also done chronologically

-- According to tradition, what is the reason for the order in which the 4 Gospels appear in the N.T.? ** They are said to be arranged in the order in which they were written.

-- What further division do we have in the O.T.? ** in Prophecy
-- What are these divisions? ** Major and minor prophets
-- What is meant by "major" and "minor" here? ** those with lots of writing and those with not much writing, big and little.
-- How are the books arranged within the major prophets? ** Chronologically
-- How are the books arranged within the minor prophets? ** Chronologically
-- What further division do we have in the N.T.? ** in the Letters
-- What are they? ** Paul's letters and other people's letters
-- How are Paul's letters arranged, what made men decide which to place first, etc.? ** by their length, long letters first, going down to Philemon, 1 chapter
-- But how are Paul's letters further divided? ** into those to churches and those to individuals
-- How are the other people's letters arranged? ** also by length, except it is each author's book grouped together.
-- Where do we find most of the "stories" in the Bible? ** in the History part
-- Where would the Psalms be? ** in the Poetry part
-- How many books are in the entire Bible? ** 66
-- So where would we find the books by Peter? ** in the "other" letters
-- The book of Ruth? ** in the O.T. history
-- The book of Joel? ** in the O.T. minor prophets
-- The book of Ephesians? ** among Paul's letters
-- The book of I Samuel? ** in the O.T. history

APPLICATIONS:

** If we know how the Bible is put together, we can more easily find things in it.
** It is important to be as familiar with the Bible, God's word, as we can, just because it is God's word.

Chart: Books of Bible Filled in on Line Chart

THE BIBLE
has
66 books

OLD TESTAMENT
(39 books)

HISTORY
(17)

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuter.
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
I Sam.
II Sam.
I Kings
II Kings
I Chron.
II Chron.
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

POETRY
(5)

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Eccles.
S. of Sol.

PROPHESY
(17)

MAJOR
- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel

MINOR
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi

NEW TESTAMENT
(27 books)

HISTORY
(5)

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts

LETTERS
(21)

PAUL'S
- Romans
- I Cor.
- II Cor.
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- I Thessalonians
- II Thessalonians
- I Timothy
- II Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon

OTHERS
- Hebrews
- James
- I Peter
- II Peter
- I John
- II John
- III John
- Jude

PROPHESY
(1)

Revelation

For Those Who are Interested: How the Jews Put Their Scriptures Together

=== The Jews, of course, only have the Old Testament, which they call simply "The Holy Scriptures." As I said before, they put their Scriptures together in a different way than we put our Old Testament together. For those who are interested, this is the way they do it (but don't let it confuse you in how we do it!).

=== First they divide it into 3 big parts: (1) The Law, (2) The Prophets, and (3) The Writings. Then they put the books into the following order:

CHART: THE ORDER OF THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES

1) The Law:
    - Genesis through II Kings (the same as ours)
2) The Prophets:
    - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel
    - The 12 Minor Prophets (in the same order as we do)
3) The Writings:
    - Psalms, Proverbs
    - Job
    - Song of Solomon
    - Ruth
    - Lamentations
    - Ecclesiastes
    - Esther
    - Daniel
    - Ezra, Nehemiah
    - I & II Chronicles

Two Lessons Using the Time Line

Man's History Can Be a Line Chart

In this lesson you will be showing where the events of the Bible fit into the entire history of mankind. For this first lesson, use the chart at the end of this lesson (also in Teacher Helps at the end of this booklet) as a guide line and don't fill in the books of the Bible (except Genesis as indicated). You will just be talking about events. In the next lesson, you will put the books of the Bible in the proper historical places. So leave plenty of room below the time line to fill in the books of the Bible in the next lesson.

=== Remember how we talked about a line chart when we were looking at how the Bible is put together? Well, today we're going to show the entire history of man on a line chart (or we might call it a "time line") -- not all of the events, of course, but enough to show what we're talking about. And we're going to show where Bible history comes on the time line, where it comes in relation to the entire history of man. I think this will help us keep the Bible and its event more straight in our minds. And that will make the Bible itself a more simple book for us.

=== I'm going to be using the chronology that was figured out from the Bible by a man named Ussher. He went through the genealogies of the Bible and I don't know what all and put a general date on all of the events of the Bible. His dates as he goes along in history coincide with regular secular history, but he used Bible, not secular history, to get his dates. If you have little dates down at the bottom of the pages in your Bible, these dates are probably "Usher's Chronology". I have done figuring in certain parts of the Bible, and my figures agree with his in those parts (though that probably doesn't mean much of anything!). There are a couple of differences between the genealogies in Genesis and Matthew, but we're not going to worry about those. I think God gave us ages for a reason, so we're just going to take them as Ussher has them here.

So now, draw a long line on a big piece of paper or a blackboard. Ask questions as you fill it in. Use the Chart at the end of this lesson as a guide. If you don't want to draw it, just use the chart and point out things. But I'd really recommend that you try drawing this as you talk. It will be much less confusing for the women.

Now put in CREATION at the beginning of the line and NOW at the end. At this point I put in a squiggly line after "Now."

=== It has been right around 6000 yrs since Creation until now. This squiggly line shows that there will continue to be time before the return of Christ.

Divide the line with marks into 1000 year periods (one at the beginning, one at the end, and five spaced evenly across the rest of the line and with marks for 500 years (one in the middle between each 1000 year mark. Just make the marks, a little one for the 500 yrs and a bigger one for the 1000 yrs. Then I went ahead and put 4 even spaced tiny lines between each of these to show the 100 year periods. I found that made it easier for me to see where I was. But you do as you want.) I also now put a question mark above the squiggly line.

=== This question mark shows that we don't know how long it will be until the return of Christ.

--- In history books and on calendars we divide history in 2 parts. What do we use to make that division? ** Christ

Put in CHRIST, A.D. and B.C. brackets, and write in 1000 and 500 year DATES. I don't put a date at "Christ", but be sure to start at "Christ" and work outward to put in your 1000 year dates. This will end with "4000" at the beginning of your long time line and "2000" at the end of your long time *line.*

=== Now let's see where some of the things we're familiar with come in.

--- When was Columbus? ** 1492

Write "Columbus" and draw a dotted line down to just before 1500.

Now write in just a few other important events and connect them to their dates. For instance, Crusades (at about 1000), Columbus, Revolutionary War (1776) Spanish American War (1898) and World War I (1915), I used other events, too, but you use dates that would mean something to your women.

=== Our nation's history doesn't cover much in the overall picture of humanity, does it!

--- When does the Old Testament start? ** at 4000 B.C.

--- And when do we have the last writing of the Old Testament? ** 400 B.C.

Put in a big bracket to show the Old Testament.

--- What years does the New Testament cover? ** From Christ to about 96 A.D.

Put in a short bracket to show the New Testament. Remember, there will be a 400 yr gap.

=== The O.T. is divided in half by ABRAHAM

--- So when will Abraham come in? ** at 2000 B.C.

Put Abraham in with his "connecting line" to the time line.

=== After Abraham, the B.C. period conveniently divides into approximate 500 years periods with big names.

--- Who would come about 500 years after Abraham? ** Moses

--- Who would come about 500 years after Moses? ** David

--- And who would come about 500 years after David? ** Daniel

Put in MOSES at the 1500 date B.C., DAVID at the 1000 B.C. date (you can draw a little crown with him if you want), and DANIEL at the 500 B.C. date as you talk.

=== The Flood occurred about 1650 years after Creation, that is, at about 2400 B.C. *(Put in FLOOD. Draw a tiny boat if you want.)*

--- Do you remember what big event is recorded in the Bible that happened between the Flood and Abraham? ** the Tower of Babel

Put in TOWER OF BABEL. Draw a little tower. I didn't think a connecting line down to the time line was necessary, so I didn't put one. Besides it's only a 400 year period, and we don't know just when it happened during that 400 yrs.

=== We don't know exactly when the Tower of Babel was during this about 400 years between the Flood and Abraham, but it was there.

--- Now, the Bible is divided up into certain historical parts; in what books do we find Creation and Abraham? ** Genesis

Point to these as you say them to give emphasis.

--- The book of Genesis ends with what event *(let them look it up and tell you)*? ** the death of Joseph

=== Yes, Genesis starts with Creation at about 4000 B.C. and then goes approximately 2400 years and ends with the death of Joseph in Egypt, with Joseph in a coffin in Egypt! So the book of Genesis covers a very long period of time. Almost 2400 years!

Draw a sort of narrow box under the time line to show GENESIS. Under this box write in Genesis with arrows to indicated that it covers all of those many years. Then draw a line down all the way to the O.T. line, making a big box. I used a different color for this, but you don't have to.

=== After that we have about a 70 year gap before the start of the book of Exodus.

=== Exodus, of course, starts with Moses. Remember, the Bible is not only a history of mankind, it is a specific history of the nation of Israel, God's chosen people.

--- Why would that be? ** because it is the story that leads up to when Jesus would die for our sins, and Jesus is a Jew, so we'd need Jewish history

=== Now Moses was the first judge of Israel. So what is called "the period of the judges" starts and goes on for about 400 years.

Put in JUDGES and draw a line all the way down to the line of O.T.

--- What period comes after the period of the judges? ** the period of the kings

--- Is the period of the kings going to start with David? ** no

--- Why not? ** because David was the second king of the Jews

--- Who was the first? ** Saul

=== So the period of the kings starts just before David and goes on for about 400 years.

Put in KINGS and draw a line all the way down.

=== After that was the Babylonian captivity, or exile, which lasted about 70 years. Then they returned to Israel and rebuilt Jerusalem. And that is the end of the history that the Bible gives us of the history of the nation of Israel before Christ.

*Put in **EXILE** and draw a line all the way down.*

=== Now let's see if we can figure out when various events and people took place. Remember, these are approximate dates, give or take 50 or so years. But in the overall picture of 6000 yrs, a few years here or there aren't really important to us. We are after a general picture so that we can hang things in places. After all, if we were reading "Gone with the Wind," we'd want to know when it took place. Or "Ivanhoe." What century did it take place? Knowing when things or people come into history makes them more meaningful.

Use other books than I mentioned if you wish. Use some books that people would be familiar with as examples. Try to get the books from various periods of history like before the Civil War, after W.W. II, etc. Just so they get the importance of this idea.

--- Now, again, the Bible is not only man's history, it is specifically Jewish history; why would that be? ** because the Jews were God's chosen people through whom He revealed Himself and through whom the Saviour of the world would come

=== We never want to lose sight of that fact.

Now just ask the following questions. As they answer, just point to the proper place on the Time Line. Make sure they are watching carefully. Don't write anything down.

=== So let's go over what we've just put down.

--- After Abraham, the Bible starts on the Jewish history; what "periods" does Jewish history before Christ divide into? ** Period of the Judges, Period of the Kings, and the Period of the Exile or Captivity

--- Where and with whom does the Period of the Judges start? ** with Moses about 1500 B.C.

--- Where does the Period of the Kings start, and what name do we use as the memory aid? ** about 1000 B.C., just before David

--- And approximately when is the Period of the Captivity or Exile and then the return to Israel, and what name do we use? ** about 500 B.C., and we use Daniel

=== This period of the Exile also includes when they returned to the land of Israel and rebuilt the temple and the city of Jerusalem.

--- By the way, as a matter of review, why can we tie Daniel up with the Period of Captivity? ** Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Babylonians took Daniel captive as a young man, gave him a college education, and eventually placed him practically over the whole kingdom

=== All of the well known stories about Daniel and about his 3 friends occur during the Captivity.

--- And who were his 3 friends? Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednigo

=== So there we have 4 names and 3 periods: Divide the B.C. period in half with Abraham, then follow each 500 yrs. with Moses (Period of Judges), David (Period of Kings), and Daniel

(Period of Captivity). If you memorize these 4 names and dates, you will be able to hang almost every Bible person and event about which you know 1 or 2 details into approximately its proper place.

=== Now let's use what we've learned.

=== Usually if you can remember a few details about a person in the Bible, you can figure out pretty much where he comes in the picture. We will look at various periods of time in the Bible: Pre-Flood, the time between the Flood and Abraham, the time between the call of Abraham and when Jacob and his family went down into Egypt (actually that is all in the book of Genesis, isn't it?!), the Period of the Judges, the Period of the Kings, the time of the Captivity (or Exile), and the New Testament Period. Then we'll see if we can put some people or events into these periods and be able to figure out more or less when they lived. So let's try some:

If they can't remember at first, try to get them to remember some details about the person like who they knew or talked to. Write these names in the appropriate spaces above the line on the chart.

--- During which period of time did Samson live? ** period of the Judges
--- Methuselah? ** before the Flood
--- Solomon? ** period of the kings
--- Zachias? ** New Testament (he climbed a tree to see Jesus)
--- Enoch? ** before the Flood
--- Balaam and his donkey? ** period of the judges (was just before they entered the land)
--- Isaac? ** right after Abraham
--- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednigo? ** Exile or Captivity (friends of Daniel)
--- Seth? ** shortly after Creation (before the Flood)
--- Samuel? ** period of the judges
--- Paul? ** New Testament
--- Ahab? ** period of the kings
--- Goliath? ** just before David
--- Ruth? ** period of judges (David's great-grandmother)
--- Elijah? ** period of kings (talked to King Ahab)
--- Mordecai? ** (Esther's uncle) exile (captivity)
--- Noah? ** Flood
--- the parting of the Red Sea? ** at Moses
--- Gideon? ** period of Judges
--- Cain? ** right after Creation
--- Joseph and his coat of many colors? ** between Abraham and Moses
--- Deborah? ** period of judges
--- Peter? ** New Testament
--- Joshua? ** period of judges
--- Job? ** probably during Genesis between the Flood and Abraham
--- Daniel in the lions' den? ** exile or captivity
--- Elisha? ** period of kings (talked to kings)
--- Ezra? ** exile or captivity (helped rebuild Jerusalem)
--- Gideon? ** period of judges
__ Aquila and Priscilla? ** New Testament
--- Josiah? ** period of kings
--- Isaiah? ** period of kings (prophesied to kings, warning them to repent)
--- Shem? ** between Flood and Abraham

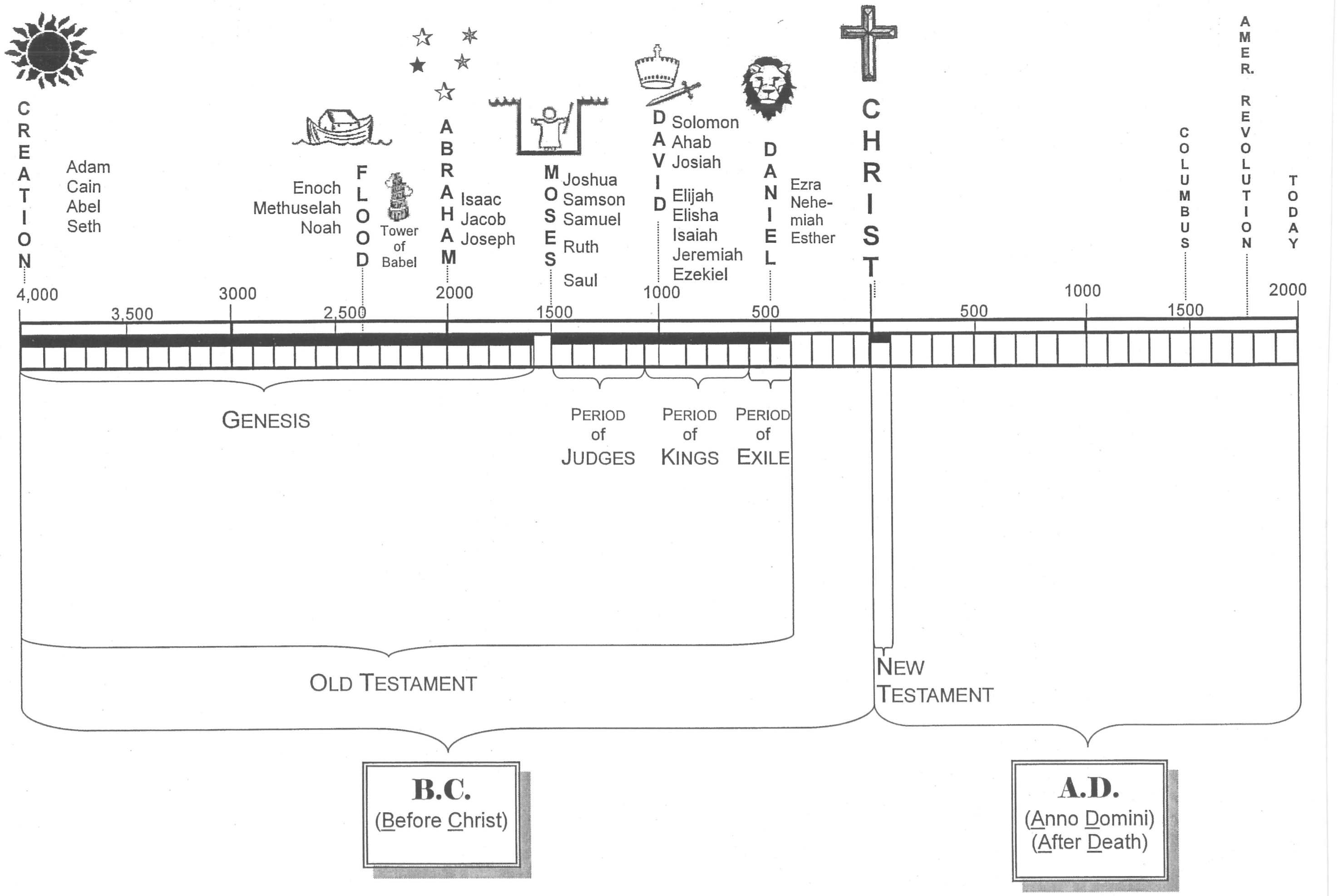
--- Jonah and the whale? ** period of kings
--- the raising of Lazarus? ** New Testament (Jesus did it)
--- Nicodemus? ** New Testament (he came to Jesus by night)
--- Saul of Tarsus? ** New Testament
=== Of course, that is Paul again, isn't it?
--- King Saul? ** period of the kings, just before David
=== He was the first king of the Jews, wasn't he?
--- The First Coming of Jesus? ** New Testament
--- His Second Coming? ** somewhere in our future!
=== So that is all for this time. Next time we'll see where the different books of the Bible fit in our time line.

You'll be using this chart again in the next lesson to fill in the books of the Bible.

APPLICATIONS:

** It is good to be familiar with the Bible, and any way that we can make it easier to remember is good.
** The Bible is a history book that all points to Christ, both His First and His Second Comings.

Chart: Man's History on a Time Line


CREATION
Adam
Cain
Abel
Seth
Enoch
Methuselah
Noah
FLOOD
Tower of Babel
ABRAHAM
Isaac
Jacob
Joseph
MOSES
Joshua
Samson
Samuel
Ruth
Saul
DAVID
Solomon
Ahab
Josiah
Elijah
Elisha
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Ezekiel
DANIEL
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
CHRIST
COLUMBUS
AMER. REVOLUTION
TODAY
4,000
3,500
3000
2,500
2000
1500
1000
500
500
1000
1500
2000
GENESIS
PERIOD of JUDGES
PERIOD of KINGS
PERIOD of EXILE
OLD TESTAMENT
NEW TESTAMENT
B.C.
(Before Christ)
A.D.
(Anno Domini)
(After Death)

Putting the Books of the Bible on a History Time Line

OMIT this review up until next bold face writing if this lesson is combined with the previous one.

=== Last week we made a time line showing the history of man and how Bible history fitted in. First let's have a little review:

Use the chart you made last time and point the things out as you talk.

-- Approximately how long has the history of man been?: ** 6000 yrs.

-- What do we use to divide our calendar into the dates we use?: ** Christ

-- So approximately how long has it been since Christ? ** 2000 yrs.

=== Remember, the United States has been a nation approximately 225 yrs!

-- Where does the Old Testament fit into man's history? ** Creation to about 400 B.C.

-- Where does the New Testament fit into man's history? ** Christ to about 90 A.D.

-- Approximately how long has it been since Creation to Christ? ** 4000 yrs.

-- What big name do we use to divide the B.C. period in half? ** Abraham

-- How long does this leave from Abraham to Christ? ** 2000 yrs

-- How does this compare with our history since Christ? ** the same

-- Besides Creation itself, what was the big event we know of before Abraham? ** the Flood

=== Now, remember, from Abraham until Christ, we have a "big" name approximately every 500 years to use as memory aids in helping us remember Bible "stories" and events. Let's see if we can remember them.

-- Who comes about 500 yrs. after Abraham? ** Moses

-- Who comes about 500 yrs. after Moses? ** David

-- Who comes about 500 yrs. after David? ** Daniel

-- Now, the Bible is not only man's history, it is specifically Jewish history; why would that be? ** because the Jews were God's chosen people through whom He revealed Himself and through whom the Saviour of the world would come.

-- So, after Abraham, the Bible starts on the Jewish history. What "periods" does Jewish history before Christ divide into? ** Period of the Judges, Period of the Kings, and the Period of the Exile or Captivity

-- Where and with whom does the Period of the Judges start? ** with Moses about 1500 B.C.

-- Where does the Period of the Kings start, and what name do we use as the memory aid? ** 1000 B.C., just before David

-- But who was actually the first king? ** Saul

=== David was the second king, wasn't He. But the promise to Judah of kings from his line up through the Messiah starts with David, doesn't it?

-- Approximately when is the Period of the Captivity and what name do we use? ** about 500 B.C., and we use Daniel

-- By the way, as a matter of review, why can we tie Daniel up with the Period of Captivity? ** Nebuchadnezzar, the King of the Babylonians took Daniel captive as a young man, gave him a college education, and eventually placed him practically over the kingdom; all of our stories about Daniel and about his 3 friends occur during the Captivity.

-- And who were his 3 friends? Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednigo

=== So, again, there we have 4 names and 3 periods: Divide the B.C. period in half with Abraham, then follow each 500 yrs. with Moses (Period of Judges), David (Period of Kings), and Daniel (Period of Captivity). As I said before, if you memorize these 4 names and dates, you will be able to hang almost every Bible person and event about which you know one or two details into approximately its proper place.

END OF OMIT if this lesson us combined with the earlier one.

=== Now let's go on to something new. Let's fit the various books of the Bible onto the History line more or less in their proper places.

You'll use the chart that you made last week for this lesson, adding to it as you go along.

--- I know we did this last week, but, again, where on this history line would you put the first book of the Bible, Genesis? ** naturally at the beginning!

--- How long a time did we say Genesis covers? ** approximately 2400 yrs

Point out the big box under GENESIS (which you already had written in) -- see the chart.

--- By the way, where would the book of Job probably come in? ** probably before Abraham, though after the Flood

Put in JOB

--- And where did we say last time that the book of Genesis ends? ** with the beginnings of the Jewish nation in Egypt, and Joseph dead and in a coffin

=== "Exodus" means "Exit" or "going out". Naturally it would be next chronically.

--- Under which name here on our time line do we put it? ** Moses

Put in EXODUS

--- And Moses is the first judge over the nation of Israel, so this is during what period? ** Judges

--- Remembering your Bible stories, who is the leader of the Jews after Moses dies? ** Joshua

Put in JOSHUA

=== As the name implies, the book of JUDGES is about the other judges.

Put in JUDGES

--- What is the next book of the Bible? ** Ruth

--- Knowing what you do about the book of Ruth, where will we put it? ** during the Period of the Judges.

Put in RUTH

--- Now, I Samuel is a transition book. What position did Samuel have? ** he was both a priest and a judge

Let them look it up the answer to these next two questions.

--- Where does the book of I Samuel begin? ** with the birth of Samuel

--- But how does the book of I Samuel end? ** with the death of Saul

=== So the book of I SAMUEL starts with the birth of the last judge (Samuel) and ends with 22 chapters about the 1st king, Saul. We'll go ahead and put it right at the beginning of the Period of the Kings but overlap it with the Period of the Judges.

Put in I SAMUEL

From now on, put in the books (that I've underlined and put in all capital letters) as they come in under the period of the kings.

=== II SAMUEL is the story of King David's reign, so naturally it would go under the Period of the Kings.

--- Now, if II Samuel is the story of King David, what other book of the Bible would have been written or mostly written during that time? ** PSALMS.

=== I realize, of course that not all of the Psalms were written by David, but most of them were.

=== Ok, right here we're going to put I CHRONICLES. I Chron. starts out with 9 chapters of genealogies. Then I Chron., has 19 chapters given over to retelling or adding details to the reign of King David.

=== The reigns of Saul and David are given in great detail, as you can see. Together they reigned 80 years. That is about 1/5th of the Period of the Kings. So here I'm going to have a break and do the rest of the kings of the Jews in a second column under "period of the Kings" (also I'd run out of room at the bottom of the paper!). We'll start off with I KINGS. I Kings has 22 chapters, of which half of it, 11 chapters are given to the reign of King Solomon.

--- So, now that we've mentioned Solomon, which other books of the Bible would go in here? ** PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES, and SONG OF SOLOMON

=== As we said, half of the book of I Kings deals with Solomon. Then it has the division of the Jewish Kingdom into two kingdoms.

--- What are these two division called? ** the northern 10 tribes are called Israel, and the southern 2 tribes are called Judah

=== I Kings covers the 1st several kings of the divided kingdoms and ends with the death of that wicked king of Israel, Ahab. In fact, 5 chapters are given over to the reign of Ahab.

=== II KINGS covers the rest of the history of the Northern Kingdom and then up to the time when Nebuchadnezzar destroys the temple in Jerusalem.

=== So, I & II Kings deals mainly with the Northern Kingdom. II CHRONICLES goes back and uses 9 chapters of its 36 chapters retelling Solomon's reign, then deals mainly with the Southern Kingdom. It ends up with the utter destruction of the Jewish kingdoms by Nebuchadnezzar.

--- Why did God allow His chosen nation to be destroyed like this? ** they had turned away from God and gone into idolatry.

--- With this in mind, what books do you think might be included at this point under the period of the Kings? ** the prophets.

=== I'm going to put them in, not by Major or Minor prophets, but in the Chronological order I came up with. There are some differences just where some of them go. I noticed that this order among the minor prophets that I have here isn't in the same order as the order that they come in the Bible, but I don't think that makes any difference.

Put in JONAH, JOEL, AMOS, HOSEA, ISAIAH, MICAH, NAHUM, ZEPHANIAH, HABAKKUK, JEREMIAH, LAMENTATIONS, OBADIAH

--- Okay, now the Jews are carried away captive, the Northern tribe by the Assyrians and the Southern tribe by the Babylonians, and the Temple (and Jerusalem) has been destroyed. So we are now in the Period of the Captivity or Exile. So what book do you think of now? ** Daniel

Now you will put the books that are underlined and in all capital letters under the Period of the captivity or exile as we come to them.

=== Yes, Daniel. However, I'm going to put EZEKIEL first. Ezekiel's book starts about the same time as Daniel's, but Ezekiel stops a long time before Daniel does. DANIEL

=== Toward the end of the Captivity, God gave HAGGAI 4 prophecies about the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem.

=== At the end of the Captivity Period, some of the Jews were able to go back to Israel. The prophet ZECHARIAH wrote at this time, and the rest of the historical books of the Old Testament took place. EZRA, ESTHER, NEHEMIAH. Then last of all came the prophet MALACHI who ends with the words about sending the prophet Elijah before the coming of the Lord, which is quoted in the New Testament as having been fulfilled in John the Baptist.

=== Then come the 400 silent years when no Bible was written.

=== And now for the difficult ones! During what time do the rest of the books of the Bible come?! ** New Testament

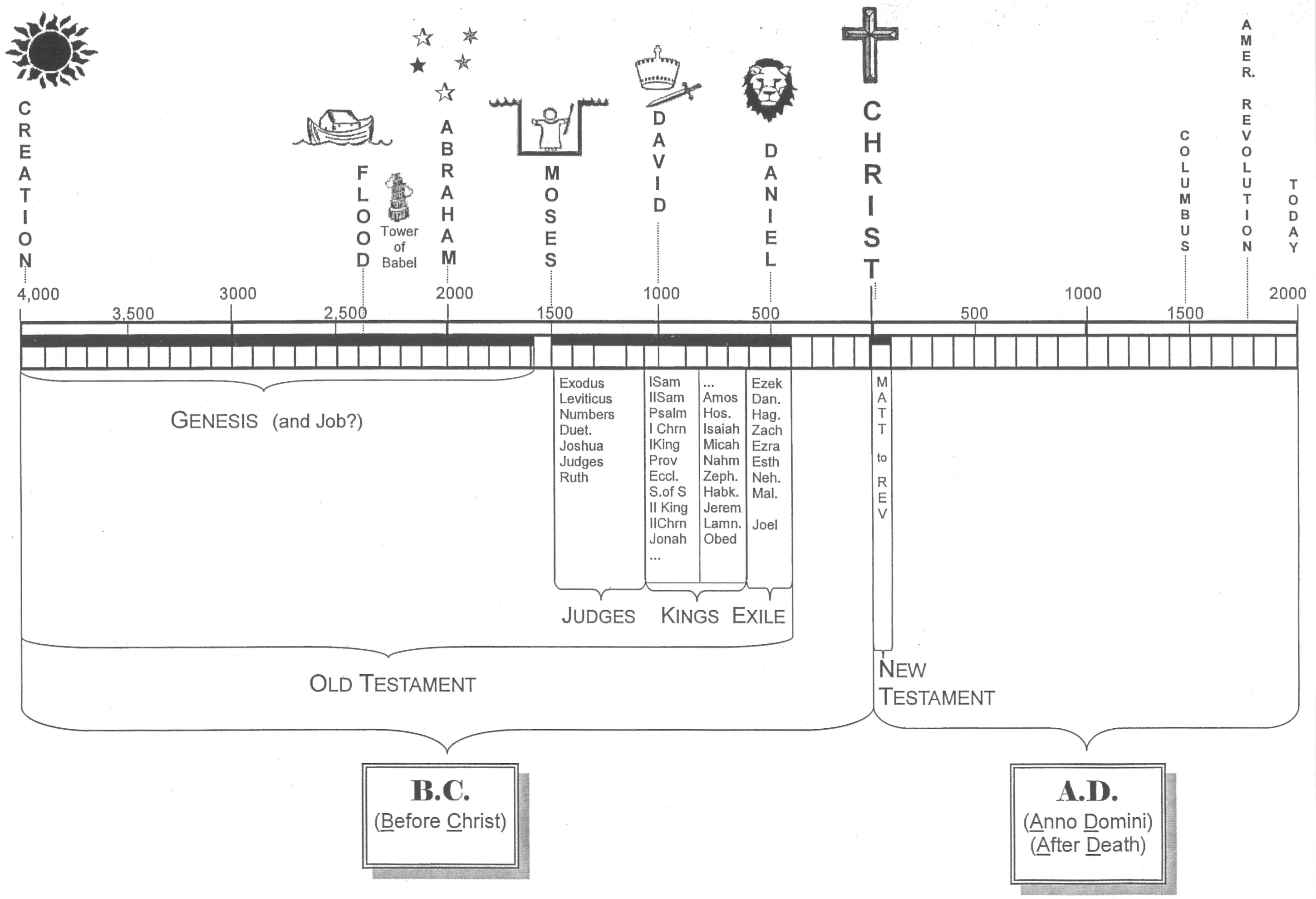
Put MATT. to REV. under the New Testament

=== So here we see how the books of the Bible fit into the history of the Jews, and how the history of the Jews fits into the overall history of man. But how can we apply all of this to our own lives?

APPLICATIONS:

- ** It is never possible to know too much about the Bible, the written word that God gives us. The more we know about the Bible's background, the easier it will be to know and remember more about the Bible.
- ** The more we know the background of the Bible, the less confused we will be about it.
- ** God is orderly.
- ** We can do all sort of remembering about Biblical things if we just don't take them out of context.

CHART: FILLING IN THE BOOKS OF BIBLE ON THE TIME LINE


CREATION
FLOOD
Tower of Babel
ABRAHAM
MOSES
DAVID
DANIEL
CHRIST
COLUMBUS
AMER. REVOLUTION
TODAY
4,000
3,500
3000
2,500
2000
1500
1000
500
500
1000
1500
2000
GENESIS (and Job?)
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Duet.
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
ISam
IISam
Psalm
I Chrn
IKing
Prov
Eccl.
S.of S
II King
IIChrn
Jonah
...
...
Amos
Hos.
Isaiah
Micah
Nahm
Zeph.
Habk.
Jerem.
Lamn.
Obed
Ezek
Dan.
Hag.
Zach
Ezra
Esth
Neh.
Mal.
Joel
MATT to REV
JUDGES
KINGS
EXILE
OLD TESTAMENT
NEW TESTAMENT
B.C.
(Before Christ)
A.D.
(Anno Domini)
(After Death)

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Chapter 1: Creation

=== We have been having general overviews and background. Today we're going to start a more specific study of the book of Genesis itself. We're going to try to cover the events in Genesis and pretty much get all of the little "stories" in order. Genesis is the beginning of everything: the beginning of the world, of man, of the Jews. We're going to start off with the very first chapter of Genesis and just work our way through. Of course, that means that we start with a look at Creation. There are 2 chapters that deal with Creation. We are going to take them both together, just stopping when we run out of time!

*-- Gen. 1:1-2 From v. 1, when was Creation? ** "in the beginning"

--- Who did the creating? ** God

--- Which part of the Godhead is specifically mentioned in v. 2 as being there at Creation? ** the Holy Spirit

*-- John 1:1-3 From these verses, which part of the Godhead do we also see was involved in the Creation? ** God the Son (Jesus)

=== We're not going to turn to it, but in Rev. 4 and 5, John is in Heaven. He sees a throne with someone on it. 24 elders fall down and worship the One on the throne and say that He is worthy of all worship because He created all things.

--- So who is the One on the throne Who had created all things? ** God

=== The One on the throne has a book in His hand, and an angel asks who is worthy to open the book. No one is worthy to until John sees a Lamb which had been slain but is now worthy to open the book.

--- Who would that Lamb represent? ** Jesus

=== All right, the Lamb comes and takes the book out of the hand of the One on the throne and proceeds to open the book.

--- So Who would the One on the throne be? ** It can only be God the Father, because the Lamb is obviously Jesus, God the Son, and the Lamb is taking the book from the One on the throne. So there are 2 personages involved here.

=== That means that God the Father was also involved in the Creation, doesn't it? From these verses, we can see that all 3 parts of the Trinity were there and involved at the Creation.

*-- Gen. 1:3-5 From v. 3, what does God do in order to create? ** He spoke

--- What day of Creation are we talking about now? ** Day 1

--- What did God create on the First Day? ** Light

=== I'm going to use pictures (of a sort!) for each day of Creation. I don't consider this being childish; I think it is a good way for us to remember. I'm very "visual" myself.

There is a (poorly!) drawn chart that illustrates the days of Creation at the end of this lesson and also in Teacher Helps at the end of this booklet. Start here using the Days of Creation chart. You can just use the chart as one picture, or you can cover all of the "days" and then uncover them one at a time as you read about them. (I drew a picture for each day on typing paper and put it up as we came to that day.) Or you could just draw the sketches on a black board as you talk.

--- What did God do with the light? ** separated it from the darkness

--- What did God call the light time? ** day

--- And what did God call the dark time? ** night

--- How does God indicate that this happened on a day and not over a long period of time? ** it says "the evening and the morning....."

=== I don't see how God could have been more clear that this was a real, actual day, as we have now. If He had meant a long period of time, He could have said any number of things: "after days," "in the fullness of time", etc.

*-- Gen. 1:6-8 Which day is it now? ** the 2nd day

--- What did God create on the 2nd day? ** the sky

--- How did He do that? ** evidently was there not only water all over the earth, but there was quite a bit of water in the atmosphere, so God divided the water in the oceans from the water in the atmosphere

--- What is the longest amount of time that it took God to make the sky? ** just one day

=== "...an evening and a morning..."

=== So now there is a world all covered with oceans and there is the sky.

*-- Gen. 1:9-13 After this 2nd evening and morning, what day are we now in? ** 3rd

--- How many things did God do on this 3rd day? ** 2

--- What are they? ** (1) separated the waters, making dry land and oceans, and (2) made plants, evidently full grown ones

--- Was there just one kind of plant? ** no, grass, other plants, and fruit trees are specifically mentioned.

--- What detail is given about these plants? ** that the plants with seeds would reproduce with these seeds more plants, each like itself ("after its kind")

=== So an apple tree would have seeds that would grow more apple trees, the peach tree's seeds would grow more peach trees, the wheat would produce seeds that would grow more wheat, etc.

--- What does it say after each day when God looks over what He created that day? ** that it was "good"

=== God didn't do a sloppy job, did He?

=== So God has created the basics now: day and night, the sky, and dry land with plants.

--- How long did all of this take God to create these basic things? ** 3 days.

=== And now in the next 3 days God is going to fill in each of these basic things.

*-- Gen. 1:14-19 Now what day are we dealing with? ** the 4th

--- And what did God make on this 4th day? ** holders for the light that He'd made on the 1st day: sun, moon, stars

--- What were these light holders to do? ** (1) give light as they divide the day from the night, and (2) to be signs to show the seasons and years.

=== This all sounds to me like the way time is run now: 24 hour days and 365 day years with the 4 seasons

*-- Gen. 1:20-23 Which day now? ** 5th

--- What does God create on the 5th day? ** water creatures of all kinds and birds

--- How much time did God allow Himself to make all of the water creatures and birds? ** just that one day

--- When God created the plants, He made them so that they would reproduce "after (according to) their kind"; what does it say about the sea creatures and birds? ** they, also, will reproduce "after their kind".

--- In v. 22, what does God tell the sea creatures and birds to do? ** to have lots of babies and fill the oceans and sky

=== So they are to fill what God had created on the 2nd day.

--- Also in v. 22, what did God do to the sea creatures and birds? ** blessed them

*-- Gen 1:24-27 What day is it now? ** 6th

--- What does God create on this 6th day? ** (1) land creatures of all kinds and (2) a man and woman

--- Are the animals and humans mentioned separately, or are they just lumped together? ** separately

=== So these animals and humans are to fill the dry land that God made on the 3rd day.

--- In the very beginning of v. 24, what are we told about the animals that reminds us of the way the plants, sea creature, and birds were created? ** they were made "after (according to) their kind"

--- And what does that mean? ** that they will reproduce babies like themselves

=== Now, that doesn't necessarily mean that there were 50 kinds of dogs and 70 kinds of finches. The various animals and birds can cross breed within "their kind", so they could come up with subtle differences in the various generations. That is actually evolution, but not the kind of evolution that the evolutionist would have us believe in. Breeders still come up with new breeds of cows or dogs or marigolds. That is a sort of evolution.

--- In v. 26, what does it say man was made like? ** in the image of God

--- What kind of pronoun does God use about Himself here? ** the first person plural

=== Again, this indicates that God is a Godhead, not just a single individual. This was before the "royal we", when kings started a few hundred years ago referring to themselves in the plural.

--- Also in v. 26, what job does God have in mind for the man? ** to rule over the rest of Creation

--- And, again, is this just a man who has been created on this sixth day? ** no, a man and a woman

*-- Gen. 1:28-31 In v. 28, what does God do? ** blesses the man and woman and tells them to have children, fill the earth, subdue it, and rule over all living creatures

--- What did God give the man and woman to eat? ** anything with seeds in it

--- What did God give to the animals and birds for food? ** green vegetation, leaves

=== So the birds wouldn't be pecking at the apricots and the squirrels wouldn't be eating the wheat and nuts, would they? There would be no fighting over the food between man and the animals.

--- In v. 31, what does God think of His creation at the end of the 6th day? ** it was all very good, excellent

--- And, glancing ahead at 2:1, is God going to do any more creating? ** no

=== The question might come up of when were angels created. The answer is "I don't know!". However, they are created beings, since only God Himself is eternal. I believe from some things in the Bible that it was sometime before the creation of our world, since Satan became evil before the Fall. Other than that, it is all speculation, which can be dangerous.

REVIEW:

-- When was the world and all in it created? ** in the "beginning"

-- What was created the first day? ** light

-- The second? ** the sky (an "expanse" between the water on the earth and the water in the heavens)

-- The third? ** dry land and vegetation

-- The fourth? ** sun, moon, and stars

-- The fifth? ** fish and birds

-- And the sixth? ** land animals and man

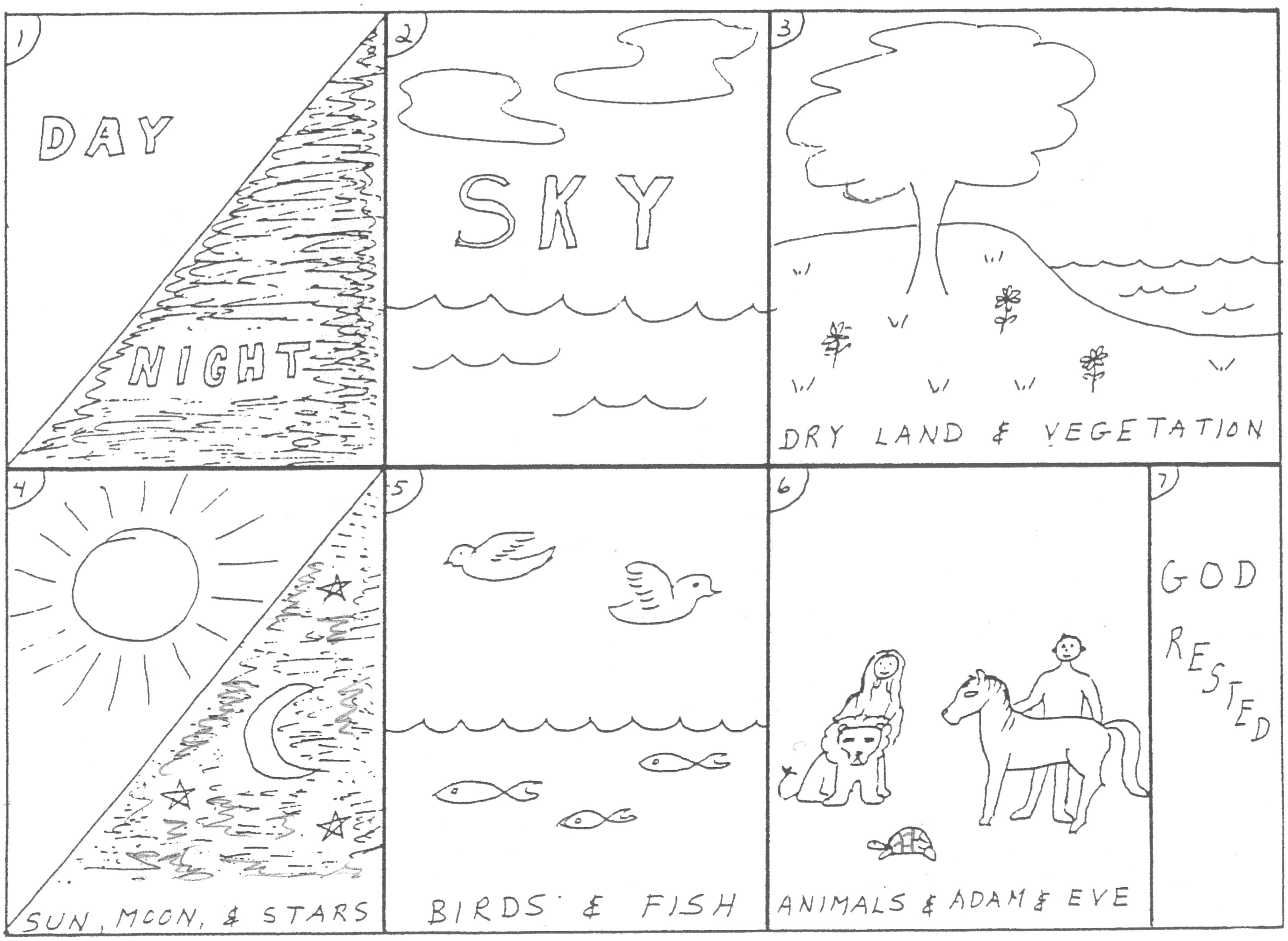
-- Is there any relationship between the 1st and 3rd days, the 2nd and 4th, the 3rd and 5th? ** yes, God did a sort of general creation on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd days. Then on the following 3 days He seems to have gone back and, in the same order, to have filled up and finished His creation: (1) light holders for the light, (2) birds and fish to fill the sky and oceans, and (3) animals and man to fill the dry land and to eat the plants.

-- How did God apparently create things on the first 5 days? ** by speaking them into existence
-- How did God view His creation? ** as good

APPLICATIONS:

** Don't pay any attention to evolutionists and all of their talk.
** When God makes something, it is very good.
** God is the beginning of everything and can do as He pleases.
** Be thankful for the beauty of Creation.
** We should praise God when we look around and see His wonderful Creation.
** We are made in the image of God and should try to behave accordingly.

CHART: DAYS OF CREATION


1
DAY
NIGHT
2
SKY
3
DRY LAND & VEGETATION
4
SUN, MOON, & STARS
5
BIRDS & FISH
6
ANIMALS & ADAM & EVE
7
GOD RESTED

Chapter 2: Creation, continued, with extra details

=== Last time we talked about Creation.

-- How many parts of the Godhead were involved in Creation? ** all 3

-- What was created the first day? ** light

-- The second? ** the sky

-- The third? ** the dry land and plants

-- The fourth? ** light holders (sun, moon, and stars)

-- The fifth? ** birds and fish

-- The sixth? ** land creatures and man

-- Just one human? ** no, both a man and a woman

-- What did the plants, birds, fish, animals, and people all have in common when they were created? ** the ability to reproduce themselves into more things like themselves

-- What job were the people going to have? ** to rule over the rest of creation and subdue it

-- What food was given to animals? ** all of the "greens" (leaves, etc.)

-- What food was given to man? ** anything with seeds in it

-- What was to be man's relationship to animals, fish, and birds? ** he was to have dominion over them

-- What did God do at the end of each day of creation? ** He checked it and saw that it was good

-- What did God think about His creation when He had finished with it? ** that it was all very good

-- How can we in a general way divide up the days of Creation that would make it easier for us to remember the order of Creation? ** into two parts -- the first 3 days were the basics, and the second 3 days filled up the basics

Point to the days on your chart (if you have one) as you say this.

=== Light, and light holders. Sky and seas, and then things to fill up the sky and seas. Dry land and plants, and then things to fill up the dry land and eat the plants.

*-- Gen. 2:1-3 In v. 1, what are we told about Creation? ** it was finished.

--- How long did Creation take? ** 6 days

--- How did God indicate that these were six days? ** by saying "an evening and a morning were..."

--- Is there any way that God could have made it clear if He did not mean six 24 hour days? ** yes

=== There are words in Hebrew that mean longer periods of time. It seems to me that God was being very careful to specify literal 24 hour days. There are good Christians who try to say that this is just a poetical way of saying a long period of time, that "a thousand years is as a day to the Lord," but they are shortening God's arm when they do this. Our all powerful God could just as easily have created everything in 6 milliseconds!

--- So do you think we have any reason at all to think that God means in these verses 6 eons or 6 anything else besides six 24 hour days? ** no

=== Remember, the Bible was made for God to tell us things. God didn't set out to make complicated puzzles that would make things say the opposite of what He meant. So I think we can trust the six days here to mean just that -- six literal 24 hour days.

--- Then what did God do on the 7th day? ** stopped from creating, rested

=== This word "rested" actually means to "cease". It means that He stopped creating, ceased from creating. It doesn't mean that God was tired.

--- What did God do to the 7th day? ** blessed it and set it apart from other days

=== The King James Bible says that God "sanctified" the 7th day. This word "sanctified" simply means "to set apart".

--- Why did He do that? ** because on the 7th day He had rested or stopped from creating

=== And 2500 years later when God gives the Jews the Ten Commandments, He gives them the Sabbath as a commemoration of the 6 days (not 6 long periods of time!) in which He created everything and then His having stopped creating on the 7th. Of course, God still isn't creating, so you might say that this 7th day is a sort of picture of our eternal rest in Christ. But I still don't think this changes the 6 literal days of Creation.

=== Now, we need to remember that the chapter divisions are not God given. Man put in the verse divisions and the chapter divisions. If I were dividing the chapters, I would have started chapter 2 here at v. 4. Because chapter 1 of Genesis told about the "week" of Creation, and Gen. 2:1-3 tell about the rest of the week with the seventh day; but now the rest of the second chapter of Genesis goes back and will give some more of the details about the sixth day of Creation. We often do that when we talk, don't we? We'll say something general and then go back and fill in the details. People sometimes try to say that there are conflicts here, two Creation stories, but God has simply given us sort of an outline in chapter 1 and now He's going to supply some details about day 6.

=== Something I noticed here was that up to this point it has always simply said "God." And this is "Elohim," which is the plural form of God. Now in the rest of chapter 2 and all through chapter 3, it's going to be calling God, "the Lord God." This "Lord" is our word "Jehovah" and means "eternal." So now it says "the Eternal God" or "Jehovah God." Then in chapter 4, it will say just "the Lord", that is "Jehovah." I don't know what significance there may be to this, but I find it very interesting.

*-- Gen. 2:4-6 Before the man was formed on the 6th day, how were things irrigated? ** God made a mist come from the earth that watered everything

--- What day of Creation would that mist probably have started on? ** I'd imagine on the 3rd day, when God made the plants, though we aren't told

*-- Gen. 2:7 This records two steps that God used to make man; what was the first one? ** God made a statue out of dirt

--- Then what was the second step? ** God breathed into its nostrils, which made the man-statue alive

=== This word here "soul" that man became simply means someone who breathes.

=== I have a footnote in one of my translations that says that the same basic chemical elements are found in man, animal life, and the soil! We humans didn't know that until recently, but God was telling us that clear back in the second chapter of Genesis!

*-- Gen. 2:8-10 How does the man decide where on this new earth that he's going to live? ** God puts him where He wants him

--- And where does God put the man? ** in the Garden of Eden

=== That could have been translated as "Garden of Pleasure." I believe this word for "garden" means and enclosed area.

--- What is in the Garden of Eden? ** all of the pretty, food-bearing trees; the tree of life; and the tree of knowledge of good and evil

--- How will the man water the Garden of Eden? ** a river flows through it

*-- Gen. 2:11-14 Looking back at v. 10, what happened to the river once it left the Garden of Eden? ** it divided into 4 parts

--- What areas are mentioned that these rivers watered? ** Havilah, Cush ("Ethiopia"), and

Assyria

=== These are all countries in what we would call Mesopotamia.

=== We won't go into the rivers of the Garden of Eden except to say that The Euphrates is mentioned, which makes us able to place where the Garden of Eden more or less was. It was over somewhere in present day Iraq, in the Middle East. Also, it is thought by everyone that the Hiddekel is the Tigris River.

=== As I was studying this, a thought came to me. If the rivers were watering these places, then it sounds as if the Garden of Eden were just an especially nice place in the world, not the only place that was habitable. I wonder if Adam and Eve were to live in the Garden of Eden and take care of it, but if they could go out and explore other places? If they were to "fill the earth", it wouldn't seem to me that they and their descendants would have been expected just to live always in the Garden of Eden and never go anywhere else. But I'd never thought of it before, that they might have gone outside of the Garden of Eden.

*-- Gen. 2:15-17 What was the man to do in the Garden of Eden? ** take care of it

=== So work itself wasn't a result of the Fall, was it? Work of itself is good for people and is to be enjoyed, it seems to me.

--- How did the man know what food he could eat? ** God told him

--- Any restrictions? ** yes, the tree of knowledge of good and evil was forbidden

--- Were they allowed to eat of the Tree of Life? ** evidently yes, since it's not mentioned as a restricted tree

=== We're going to skip v. 18 just for a minute and then come back t it.

*-- Gen. 2:19-20 How did God make the animals? ** out of the dirt

--- What else (v. 7) have we heard of that was made out of dirt? ** Adam

=== So evidently God didn't just speak all of creation into existence. It sounds like God actually worked Himself. It sounds to me as if God spoke things into existence on the first 3 days than used these newly created elements to build the rest of creation. But we really aren't given any details on this; that's just a thought on my part.

--- Has Adam been called by name up to this point? **no

=== This is the first time that we have the man named. Up to this time it has simply been "the man." And, by the way, I couldn't find any place that told whether God had given Adam the name of "Adam" or if Adam had named himself that. "Adam" seems to come from a word that means a couple of things: ground, ruddy, and person. From this, it seems to me that the name "Adam" shows that the man came from dirt, possibly red dirt (clay?), and that this word came to mean "person". So our name is literally "Mud", as the saying goes!

--- What seems to have been the first job that Adam did? ** name all of the animals

--- How did Adam find the animals in order to name them? ** he didn't have to; God brought them to Adam

--- Does it seem as if Adam named the animals before or after Eve was made? ** it seems to have been before

=== That might have prevented a lot of arguments -- or at least have made a quicker job of it! No discussions!

--- If Adam named all of those animals in just one day (which would be the case if Eve hadn't been made yet), then could there have been thousands of varieties of animals? ** I don't think so

=== Again, I think God made general categories, like a cow and bull, but not a Jersey cow and bull, a Guernsey cow and bull, a Hereford cow and bull, etc. Those either sort of evolved over time, just as all the different types of humans on earth came from Adam and Eve, or they

were bred up through selective breeding or cross breeding.
*-- Gen. 2:18, 21-23 What was lacking in the Garden of Eden? ** a helper fit for Adam
--- Did God make this helper from the dirt as He had made Adam? ** no, He made her from Adam's rib
--- How does Adam regard this new creature? ** as part of himself
--- Was she? ** yes, literally!
--- It doesn't say in this verse, but on what day was the woman made? ** it had to have been on the 6th day of Creation, since back in Genesis 1:27 during the 6th day it says that God created man, male and female
*-- Gen. 2:24-25 Here at the very beginning, on the 6th day of Creation, what does God say about marriage that should affect Adam and all men in the future? ** that they should become one person with their wives
=== And I think that is talking about more than the physical side of marriage. They were also to make a good team, be united in thought and goals.
--- What does God say about marriage that will not affect Adam and his wife but will affect future generations? ** that a man shall leave his parents and cling to his wife
--- Why wouldn't that affect Adam and Eve? ** duh!!! They didn't have parents!
--- How were Adam and his wife dressed? ** they weren't
--- Did this seem to bother them? ** no
--- Does the woman have a name (other than woman) yet? ** evidently not, or at least not that we're told

REVIEW:

-- What did God do the 7th day? ** He rested
-- Was He tired? ** no, He just "ceased" from creating
-- What did God do about the 7th day? ** He blessed it and set it apart
-- What did God make the animals and man out of? ** dirt
-- Where did the man live? ** in the Garden of Eden
-- How did the Garden of Eden get there? ** God planted it
-- What was in the Garden of Eden? ** all the kinds of pretty trees with their fruits, the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
-- How was the Garden watered? ** by a river
-- What happened to the river once it flowed out of the Garden? ** it became 4 rivers
-- Where, evidently, on the globe was the Garden of Eden? ** somewhere in Iraq in the Middle East
-- Did the Lord place any restrictions on the man's diet? ** yes, he couldn't eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil
-- Was he evidently allowed to eat from the tree of life? ** yes
-- Did the man have a name? ** yes, Adam
-- Was Adam just going to be able to play around and lie around all day? ** no, he was to take care of the Garden of Eden
-- Is work itself, then, a punishment? ** no
-- Who named the animals? ** Adam
-- Why was Adam lonely? ** he didn't have anyone like himself
-- What did God think about that? ** that it wasn't good for man to live alone
-- So what did God do about it? ** made a woman for Adam

-- How? ** put Adam to sleep and took one of his ribs and made the woman from that
-- How were they dressed? ** they weren't
-- Did that bother them? ** no, they were completely innocent

APPLICATIONS:

** The Lord is a personal God, caring about His creation.
** Work is a good thing for us, not a punishment.
** The theory of evolution is a lie!
** Marriage is a good thing, and divorce is wrong.
** In marriage, the husband and wife should be a unit unto themselves, not depending on their parents.
** There aren't 2 Creation accounts, as some people say; there are just extra details given in chapter; so the Bible doesn't contradict itself.
** Marriage from the beginning has been between one man and one woman.

Chapter 3: The Fall

=== We have Adam and his wife living happily in the Garden of Eden.

-- What were they to do there? ** take care of it

-- What was to be their relationship to the animals? ** they were to rule over the animals

-- How many prohibitions have they been given? ** one

-- What was that prohibition? ** that they weren't to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

*-- Gen. 3:1 Who was one of the more crafty creatures? ** the snake

--- From this verse we see that at least some of the animals could evidently do something then that they can't do now; what was it? ** talk

--- What did the snake say to the woman? ** "Did God tell you not to eat from any tree in the garden?"

=== Notice the wording of this question. "...not to eat from any tree..." That makes God sound sort of like a meanie!! The snake seems to be implying, "Here you are surrounded by all of these good fruit trees, and God says you can't have any of the fruit."

*-- Gen. 3:2-3 Does the woman seemed to be surprised that the snake is talking to her? ** no

=== So, again, it seems to me that probably at least some of the animals could talk to the humans.

--- What did the woman answer? ** "No, God said we can eat from any tree we want to except the tree in the middle of the garden."

--- What did she say would happen if they ate of it? ** they'd die

--- What else did the woman say that God had said about the tree of knowledge of good and evil? ** that they weren't to touch it

=== We aren't told everything that God said, so maybe He did tell her not to touch it. But whether He did or not, she was very much impressed that the tree was completely "off limits" to them; there was no doubt whatsoever in her mind about it.

*-- Gen. 3:4-5 Who was the 1st liar? ** the serpent

--- What was its lie? ** that the people wouldn't die if they ate of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil

=== The snake just baldly makes this statement!

--- What reason did the snake give for God to have forbidden the man and woman from eating the fruit? ** that God didn't want them to be like another god

--- Now, if the snake is correct here, then according to the snake, Who is the liar? ** God!!

=== Again, the snake makes God out to be a meanie, doesn't he? "Okay, you can eat the fruit around here, but God doesn't want you to be in competition with Him, so He wants to keep you ignorant."

*-- Gen. 3:6 What 3 enticements made the woman think of eating of the forbidden fruit now that the snake had made her think of the possibility of disobedience? ** (1) the tree's fruit looked like good food, (2) the tree and its fruit were pretty and delicious looking, and (3) it would be very nice to be wise

--- So what did the woman do then first of all? ** she picked a piece of the forbidden fruit and ate it

--- What did the woman do as soon as she had eaten the fruit? ** gave some to the man

--- And what did he do? ** ate it

=== Keep a marker here. We're going to quickly look at a couple of other verses.

*-- I Tim. 2:13-14 Was the woman tricked into eating the forbidden fruit? ** yes, she was deceived

--- Was the man tricked or deceived? ** no, he knew just what he was doing

*-- II Tim. 3:13 From this verse does it sound as if someone who is deceived into doing something bad should be considered innocent? ** no, we evidently are supposed to be on the ball enough to avoid being deceived into doing bad things

=== Or, as we find out elsewhere, we shouldn't be deceived into believing incorrect doctrines, either.

*-- I Cor. 15:21-22 Who was held responsible for having brought sin and death into God's creation? ** Adam

=== I find it interesting that though Eve first ate of the forbidden fruit, and those who are deceived are considered wicked right along with deceivers, Adam was the one who was held responsible for the results of this, for having brought sin into God's creation. I don't know if this was because Adam wasn't tricked or just because being a man he was held more responsible or that he was responsible for his "helper" or just what.

*-- Gen. 3:7 What was the first "god-like" "knowledge of good and evil" that the man and woman seem to have gained from eating the forbidden fruit? ** they realized that they were naked

=== Some people try to say that we only wear clothes because of custom and that nakedness in itself isn't wrong or inappropriate. But these verses sort of makes me wonder. It would almost seem that after ones childlike innocence is gone, then a sense of shame about nakedness is a natural thing. Even most so-called backward tribes in hot places wear something as they approach adulthood, even if it is only a string with a small cloth attached or a simple sheath or the like. I really have no conclusions about this at all, but I found it interesting that as soon as Adam and Eve ate of this tree of knowledge of good and evil, they immediately realized that something had to be done about the naked state they were in, a state that they had totally ignored before.

=== Some people point out that Adam and Eve had lost their sinless state, therefore, they were now spiritually "naked." However, I think this shows they were also physically naked, and I think this is what is bothering them.

--- What did they do about their nakedness? ** tried to make loincloths out of fig leaves

=== Fig leaves are large, but they shrink as they dry out! So much for us when we try to cover our sins on our own without God!

*-- Gen. 3:8 What visitor do the people have? ** God

--- What time of the day? ** in the cool of the evening

=== I often think of this verse after a hot day when the evening is lovely and cool and people start come out and enjoying the freshness as the sun is going down.

--- Where was God? ** walking in the garden

--- Do the man and woman know Who is there? ** yes

--- How? ** they recognized His voice

=== From this, we can sort of infer that perhaps God made a habit of coming and visiting the people, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about this.

=== By the way, "voice" can also be translated "sound."

--- Now, interestingly enough, does this come right out and say that Adam and Eve actually saw the Lord? ** no

=== I always figured that they saw the Lord, and I think it seems very likely that they did, but it doesn't really say so. But at least He would come visit with them and talk with them.

--- If we presume that they might have seen the Lord when He would come visit them, which part of the Godhead would that be? ** God the Son, Whom we call Jesus

=== This makes me make some comparisons here. God, probably God the Son, was in the Garden of Eden with mankind in the very beginning, and God the Son will be with the saints in the end after He returns. It seems that the Garden of Eden is sort of a picture of what the eternal state will be, our close communion with the Lord.

--- But, back to our chapter here, what is the reaction of the people as they hear the voice of God in the Garden of Eden? ** they hide themselves

--- Where did they hide? ** in among the trees

*-- Gen. 3:9-10 Why did they hide (v. 10)? ** they were afraid

--- Why does Adam say they were afraid? ** because they were naked

=== Again, we have the seemingly innate sense of the inappropriateness of nakedness.

--- Though Adam doesn't say so here, do you think he might have been afraid for another reason? ** I would think so!

--- What might that have been? ** he now knew good from evil, so I'd think he must have known that he had been bad and was afraid because of that; also he knew what God had said would happen if they ate from the forbidden fruit, that they'd die

--- Anyway, in v. 9, what does God say to Adam? ** "Where are you?"

--- Do you think God knew where they were? ** of course!

--- Then why would He ask? ** do we ever ask our children where they are or what they're doing when we know the answer good and well?! It's done to make them stop and think and to admit what they are doing!

*-- Gen. 3:11-12 What 2 questions does God ask Adam? ** (1) who told you you're naked? (2) did you eat what I told you not to?

=== Evidently the only way Adam would have been aware of his nakedness was either if someone had told him or if he had eaten the forbidden fruit. That is often the way with our children, too, isn't it? They know about something if someone tells them about it or if they have found out about it by doing something they shouldn't have done.

--- Does Adam give a direct answer? ** no, he "hedges"!

--- What is Adam's answer? ** "the woman you gave me gave the fruit to me, and I ate it"

--- On whom is Adam fastening the blame for his sin? ** anywhere but on himself! "The woman you gave me" blames God; "she gave it to me" blames the woman

=== As my husband jokingly says, Adam took it like a man; he blamed it on his wife! But isn't that typically human?! Don't children (and adults!) still try to blame anyone or anything but themselves for what they do?! Their parents, siblings, spouse, the other guy. If nothing else, "it's society's fault"! Or, as was so popular a few years back, "the devil made me do it." But Adam doesn't blame himself, does he?

*-- Gen. 3:13 Who does the Lord question now? ** the woman

=== Here God sounds like a parent questioning squabbling children, doesn't He?!

--- What does God ask the woman? ** "What have you done?"

--- Does the woman give a direct answer to a direct question any better than her husband? ** no, she blames the snake

--- What does she blame the snake of doing? ** tricking her, deceiving her

--- And had the snake tricked her? ** yes

*-- Gen 3:14-15 Does God even bother questioning the snake? ** no; He just pronounces judgment

--- What 5-part judgment does God give to the snake? ** (1) it will be more cursed than all of what we would call domesticated and wild animals, (2) it'll crawl on it's belly, (3) it'll always eat dust, (4) women will hate them, (5) the woman's seed will "bruise its head and it will bruise his heel"

--- Does it sound as if maybe the snake looked different right after Creation than it does now? ** to me it does

--- How? ** part of the curse pronounced on it was that it would crawl on its belly; I certainly wouldn't be dogmatic, but it sounds as if the snake may have had legs before

=== All over the world there are stories of dragons with legs, often also with wings. I have often wondered if snakes originally had legs and wings, but we can't know that for sure. It's just speculation. But we do know that it could evidently do something besides just crawl on its belly.

=== It's also amazing how many pagan societies worship snakes and dragons -- the symbol of the antithesis of God.

--- How long does God say that the snake be will eating dust? ** "all the days of its life"

=== Keep your finger here at Gen. 3. We're just going to look at one other reference.

*-- Is. 65:25 During what period of time is this verse talking about? ** after the return of Christ

=== This is, in my opinion during the Millennium, but we won't go into the Millennium here. What we know for sure is that this is after the Second Coming.

--- And what is the snake eating here? ** dust

=== So, at Christ's return when the curse is lifted, it sounds to me as though the snake still isn't elevated back to its original position.

=== I can't quite remember it, but at one time I heard something to the effect that snakes actually do eat dust for some reason. As I recall, it may have to do with smelling the path of potential prey. Of course, they eat other things, too!

=== Also, "eating dust" and crawling in the dirt are signs of degradation and humiliation to this day.

=== But back to Gen. 3.

--- Do women usually like snakes? ** no, God truly put enmity between snakes and women in general

=== In v. 15, God makes an interesting statement. He speaks of "her seed". As a rule "seed" refers to the descendants of males. Now that could just be an indication that women especially won't like snakes. This is true. It's also true that snakes usually bite a person's heel or foot or leg, the part they can reach. But many, in fact most or all Christians see this as referring to the Messiah who will eventually get rid of Satan. Satan was behind the attack that got Jesus nailed to the cross (where He provided for our salvation!) (Satan bit Jesus' heel, so to speak, but Jesus didn't stay dead), but Jesus will eventually throw Satan into the lake of fire forever. Which would certainly be at least equivalent to bruising a head, something much more serious.

=== Now, there is no statement that I know of that comes right out and says that the snake was in cahoots with the devil regarding the forbidden fruit or that the snake had allowed himself to be possessed by Satan, but there are many hints and indications that seem to imply this. The devil is called "that old serpent", etc. And the fact that the snake's curse isn't lifted at the Second Coming makes me wonder, also. We could sit and do a lot of useless speculating on this, but let's go on. So God has cursed the snake.

*-- Gen. 3:16 Who does God deal with next? ** the woman

--- What 2 areas of life does the woman's punishment have to do with? ** her children and husband

=== Of course, these have always been the 2 biggest things in a woman's life. Almost every little girl dreams of growing up and getting married and having children.

--- What does God seem to be saying about having children in this verse? ** I like the way the Berkeley translation says it, "I will greatly increase your pregnancy-troubles; you will suffer birth pangs"

--- Now, does it sound as if they would have had children if the Fall hadn't come? ** yes

--- What makes you say that? ** because Gen. 1:28 says God told them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth

--- So how is this different? ** it sounds as if there would just be a lot more misery and pain attached to pregnancy and delivery (how about monthly?!) that just wouldn't have been there otherwise

=== It seems to me that giving birth before the Fall would have been more like when we have a big b.m. That may take a little effort, but it isn't particularly painful. And there probably wouldn't have been so much of the morning sickness and other discomforts often associated with pregnancy, either.

=== Also, perhaps they would now have many more children. If people were not dying, you wouldn't need so many children, just enough to start spreading out over the earth.

=== Also, up until recently, many women died in childbirth from complications. Without the Fall, there would have been no death, which, I imagine, would have included no miscarriages.

--- Now, how about the husband-wife relationship? ** "her desire will be to her husband and he will rule over her"

=== I like the way the Confraternity translation puts it, "...for your husband shall be your longing, though he have dominion over you." Women want a husband; when they get one, they want him to love them (remember poor Leah); and women want to please their husbands.

--- Is male dominance something the stronger man just thought up on his own? ** no, it's part of the curse God gave with the Fall

=== Though we were originally made to be a helper for our husbands, and it sounds as if he were to be the leader. But the Fall seems to have made it more of an almost ruler-servant type situation, rather than a helper situation. At least it is in many societies, even today. It was originally 2 people cooperating to make life, one person being stronger and the other helping.

=== Notice that God first talks to these miscreants going from the greatest to the least: Man, woman, snake, asking the man and woman what they'd done. But He gives the punishments from the least to the greatest: snake, woman, man. I don't really make anything of that, but I find it interesting. It's sort of like with our kids that we may deal with the younger ones first and then really lay into the oldest whom we hold to be more responsible and to have known better the most! I'm not saying the punishments of the snake and woman aren't terrible, by the way.

*-- Gen. 3:17-19 Why does God say that Adam is being punished? ** because Adam paid attention to his wife when she told him to do something wrong, and he went ahead and did the thing he knew to be wrong

--- What is Adam's punishment? ** (1) the ground is cursed so that it will be very difficult to farm and get food, and (2) he will die and turn back to dust

--- Does there seem to be that there was also a change in Adam's diet at this time? ** (Gen. 1:29) yes, he will be eating greens like the animals

--- What about the fruit trees and other seed bearing plants that had previously been given to Adam for food; why can't he still just live on those, any thoughts? ** we can't know for sure just what is involved, but if the ground is cursed for Adam and is going to give him lots of thorns and thistles, it sounds as if the ground won't be too good for orchards either or for lots of plants, and that Adam will just have to eat what he can get

=== Again, we aren't told; but I wouldn't be surprised if at this time the animals also started eating seeds, so there would be competition between the animals and man for all kinds of food.

Also, I wouldn't be surprised if very soon the animals began eating each other. I wouldn't be surprised if man started eating animals, too. After all when Noah is told after the Flood that all animals can be eaten, it doesn't sound to me as if that were a completely new idea to eat meat. But we aren't told this -- I'm just supposing!!

*-- Gen. 3: 20 Who named Eve? ** Adam

--- Why did he name her Eve? ** it means living, and she will be the mother of every person who ever lives

--- The man has been called "Adam" all of this chapter and part of the 2nd chapter; has the woman been called "Eve" before now that we know of? ** no; she's always been referred to as "the woman".

*-- Gen. 3:21 From this verse alone, would we think that God had completely turned his back on Adam and Eve? ** no, he gave them clothes

=== My son says that the word in Hebrew means not just a loin cloth, but more like a night shirt.

--- What were the clothes made out of? ** fur

--- How would God have gotten furs? ** by killing animals

=== This killing may have driven home the thought of death, which Adam and Eve had never seen before. Also, they'd know the death of the animal was their own faults, and here there were wearing its skin -- sort of like shades of the albatross and "the Ancient Mariner."

=== We can't know for sure, of course, because it doesn't tell us, but I think there is a good chance that at this time God explained about the need for paying for sins and about sacrifices. A little later (in the next chapter) there is the offering of sacrifices, so God must have told them something about it. But I don't think we can be dogmatic about all of this -- just interesting thoughts!

*-- Gen. 3:22-24 What has now made man more like God? ** being able to know about good and evil

=== It sort of sounds as if they hadn't eaten of the forbidden fruit, that there would have been no evil on earth. What a wonderful thought!

--- Now that Adam and Eve are more like God, what does God say has to be prevented? ** the eating of the tree of life

--- Why? ** because if they had access to the Tree of Life, they would live forever

--- And what would be wrong with that? ** God would be breaking His word, because He had told them that they would die if they ate of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

=== On top of that, if people lived forever, can you imagine the horrible condition of the earth? Imagine Alexander the Great, Caesar, Attila the Hun, Hitler, Stalin, as well as countless other wicked men all alive at the same time!

=== By the way, the next time we hear of the tree of life is in the book of Revelation! It will be in the New Heavens and New Earth! So the Tree of Life is at the beginning of the Bible and the world in Genesis and then not again until at the end of the Bible and the world as we now know it. The tree of life brackets "time".

--- What induced Adam and Eve to leave the Garden of Eden? ** God drove them out

--- What is Adam to do now that he is out of the Garden of Eden? ** work the cursed ground to grow his food

--- What extra little note does God put in here about the ground that is even more humbling? ** "...from whence he came"

=== Just another reminder that Adam was made from dirt and really wasn't a god.

--- Does it sound as if the Garden of Eden sort of disappeared at this time? ** no

--- What makes you say that? ** because God put a guard there

--- What kind of a guard? ** heavenly beings called cherub or cherubim

=== From what I can figure, "cherubim" is the plural. So it sounds to me as if more than one cherub were placed there to keep people out.

--- What did these cherubim have to make sure that Adam and Eve didn't go back into the Garden? ** a flaming sword that "turned every way"

=== We aren't told here what cherubim looked like, but their appearance is mentioned in other places. The next time in the Bible that we hear of Cherubim is 2500 yrs later when Moses is told to put 2 golden cherubim on the Mercy Seat, the lid of the Ark of the Covenant.

=== Ezekiel described these cherubim. They are living creatures and have a humanlike form with 4 wings and 4 faces: man, ox, lion, and eagle. (Representations of the kinds of warm blooded creatures, it seems to me: Man, domesticated animals, wild animals, and birds.) It seems that the four faces of the cherubim are on the four sides of their heads: front--man, right side--lion, left side--ox, and back--eagle. Under the wings "on the four sides" are human hands. They seem to use 2 wing to cover their bodies and 2 wings with which to fly. Their feet are straight, whatever that means, but the sole of the foot is cloven, like a cow's foot. They seem to be shiny and the color of polished brass.

=== It seems from Ezekiel that the Cherubim either form part of God's throne themselves, making a living throne, or are in some other way very closely associated with God's throne. In the Tabernacle, God said that He would talk to the people from above the cherubim. In Ezekiel it seems as if God's throne is riding on the cherubs; they are beneath it.

=== By the way, these are not the four living creatures that are around the throne of God in Rev. 4. Those in Revelation have 6 wings and are the seraphim.

=== So the creature that guarded the way to the Garden of Eden was truly an awesome creature! Since it had a face on each side of its head, Adam or Eve certainly couldn't have gotten around it!

--- Where, in relation to Eden, did God place the cherub? ** on the east side.

=== So it sounds as if Adam and Eve went more over toward what we would call Iran.

--- And, again, why did God put the guard there? ** to keep Adam and Eve from getting to the tree of life and therefore, living forever and not dying as God had said they would if they disobeyed

--- By the way, are we told how long Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden before the Fall? ** no

--- But glancing ahead at Gen. 5:3, could they have been in the Garden of Eden for hundreds of years? ** no

--- Why not? ** because in 130 years Cain and Abel and other children were born, Cain killed Abel, and Eve had a son Seth to replace Abel

--- But, again, what had God told them would happen if they ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? ** they would die

--- Well, did God strike Adam and Eve dead at this point? ** no

--- So how is this prophecy of God's fulfilled, that they would surely die? ** I think in two ways: (1) they were no longer sinless, so they died spiritually, and (2) their bodies would then begin to start degenerating so that they would eventually die physically

--- Just a thought; we aren't told, but do you think that the Lord would now come and talk with Adam and Eve in the evening? ** I'd rather doubt it, though, again, we aren't told

=== So it would seem to me that a further punishment would be a separation from the Lord. But we aren't told this specifically.

=== Now just a thought. In a way, death was a thing of mercy for man now. Imagine living forever but never being able to be with the Lord? We will die in order to be with the Lord forever. Though perhaps God would have worked out something, like translating those who became repentant, what we would call saved or Christians.

REVIEW:

-- Who talked to Eve in the Garden? ** the snake
-- What did the serpent get Eve to do? ** eat from the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil
-- Was she aware that she wasn't supposed to do this? ** yes
-- What did Eve do after eating it? ** gave it to Adam
-- And what did Adam do? ** ate it
-- What did they realize then? ** that they were naked
-- So what did they do about it? ** made aprons from fig leaves
-- Who came to visit them that evening? ** the Lord
-- What did the man and woman do when they heard Him? ** hid among the trees
-- Who did God question first? ** Adam
-- What was Adam's excuse for eating the forbidden fruit? ** that the woman God had given him had given it to him so he had eaten the fruit
== That blames the woman and God, doesn't it!
-- Who did God question next? ** the woman
-- What is her excuse? ** the snake tricked her
-- Did God question the snake? ** no
-- What punishment did God give the snake for his part in all of this? ** that it would be cursed more than any other animal; it would have to crawl on its belly; it would eat dust; there would be enmity between it and the woman
-- What prophesy does it seem is given here? ** of Christ
-- What punishment did God give to the woman? ** increase her pain and sorrow in child birth; she would be subject to her husband
-- What punishment did God give to the man? ** the ground was cursed, and getting food would be very hard
-- What punishment for all of them? ** they would die and turn to dust
-- Would they be able to continue living in the Garden of Eden? ** no
-- Why not? ** because they might eat from the Tree of Life and not die
-- Did God send them out of the Garden still clad in fig leaves? ** no, He made them coats of skins
-- What is involved if you are going to have skins? ** the death of the animal
-- Why didn't Adam and Eve just sneak back into the Garden? ** because God put cherubim with a flaming sword to keep them out

APPLICATIONS:

** Don't listen to people who try to get you to do something you know you shouldn't.
** Be careful not to be tricked into doing something wrong.
** We are responsible for doing wrong, even if we are tricked into it.
** The Lord will punish evil.
** God keeps His promises, both for good to us and for punishment to us.

** We can't hide what we do from God.
** Sometimes when we have done wrong, we can't "un-do" it or make any amends.
** We shouldn't try to blame others for our own wrongdoings.
** We women know why were are to be subservient to our husbands!
** If we're not sure whether something is the right thing to do or not, just obey God in the situation.

Chapter 4: Cain and Abel; Life before the Flood

=== So Adam and Eve have been driven from the Garden of Eden for having disobeyed the Lord. Now their life as fallen people begins, and they will see the consequences of their sin.

*-- Gen. 4:1-2 What new thing for Adam and Eve? ** they had children

--- Should that have been a surprise to them? ** no

--- Why not? ** because they'd been told to have children and fill the earth

--- What did they name the sons that are mentioned here? ** Cain and Abel

--- By the way, do we have any indication at all that they had children before leaving the Garden of Eden? ** no

--- Who named the first son? ** Eve

=== A thing of interest is that though Adam named all of the animals, here we are told that Eve named Cain, her son.

--- Why did she name him "Cain"? ** It means "gotten" or "acquired", and she said that she had gotten a man from the Lord.

--- What occupations did Cain and Abel have? ** Cain was a farmer and Abel was a shepherd

=== This sort of divided up what man was created to do, wasn't it? Work with both plants and animals.

*-- Gen. 4:3-5 "In the course of time" what did Cain and Abel do? ** brought sacrifices to God

--- Are we told anywhere whether or not mankind had been instructed about bringing sacrifices? ** no

=== I think we sort of presume that the Lord instructed them about this at the time that He made them fur clothes -- which would have involved killing an animal. But we really aren't told anything specific. So we need to be careful about making absolute statements here. However, I think we can say that some way Cain and Abel knew about bringing sacrifices to the Lord.

=== Also, we aren't told whether they knew about sin offerings or simply about thanksgiving offerings or just what. So let's just leave it that they knew something about sacrificing, and that's what they did.

--- What did each bring? ** the fruits of their labors

--- What were the things that were sacrificed? ** Cain brought produce; Abel brought animals with the fat

--- In v. 4, what is said specifically about Abel's sacrifice? ** not only was it of the flock and the fat, but it was of the first fruits.

=== We aren't told that Cain's offering was not of the first fruits, but we also aren't told that it was of the 1st fruits; we have to be careful -- we just don't know.

=== By the way, Abel's involved killing an animal. Death came with the Fall, didn't it?

--- What did God think of the offerings? ** God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's.

--- What did God not accept besides just Cain's offering itself, v. 5? ** Cain

--- And how did Cain respond to this? ** he was very angry and this anger showed in his face

=== Notice, Cain didn't ask forgiveness. He just got mad.

*-- Heb. 11:4 Why did God accept Abel's sacrifice? ** because there was faith involved

--- What does that imply about Cain and his sacrifice? ** that Cain had no faith

=== Now I can't but help wonder exactly what this faith was in, what it concerned. We just aren't told what God had revealed to Adam and Eve nor how much they knew about redemption nor what they knew about the entire meaning of sacrifice. We aren't told that the "fruit of the ground" sacrifice of Cain was wrong in that it wasn't an animal. In fact, the Jews had non-animal sacrifices under the law of Moses. Some people try to say that the reason that God rejected Cain's sacrifice was simply because it wasn't a blood sacrifice. But I can't see that. The Jews were told in the law of Moses to offer to the Lord a tenth of their harvests, so it seems to me that Cain was simply bringing of the work of his hands to the Lord, but without the proper attitude. All we are told here is that Abel brought his sacrifice in faith and Cain didn't.

--- What did this faith make Abel? ** righteous

=== We're going to reread one verse to get the context and then go on.

*-- Gen. 4:6-7 Referring back to v. 5, again, how did Cain like it that his sacrifice wasn't accepted? ** he was very angry and the anger showed in his face

--- Did God know that Cain was angry? ** yes, He questioned Cain about the anger

--- From what we read here, does it seem that God had broken off all actual direct contact with man? ** no, God seems actually to be talking to Cain in words

--- What did God say would make Cain acceptable to God? ** if Cain "did well"

=== Within the context, this sounds like "wellness" inside, in attitude, to me rather than just having the proper form.

--- And from we just read in Hebrews, what do we know it would also have involved? ** faith

--- What does God say will happen to Cain if he doesn't do "well"? ** sin will crouch down at Cain's "door", just waiting for him.

--- But what does God tell Cain that Cain must do about this sin that will be crouching and waiting at his door? ** Cain must gain the upper hand, must master sin, rather than give in to sin.

*-- Gen 4:8 Did Cain master sin, or was it the other way around? ** the other way around

--- What kind of talking took place between Cain and Abel? ** evidently they "had words"

--- Someone with an NIV, is there an extra phrase here at the beginning of this verse? ** yes

--- What is it? ** that Cain said to Abel, "Let's go out into the field."

=== Some old manuscripts have this, while others don't. Which makes it sound as if Cain were intentionally going to pick a fight with Abel. Perhaps he was; I don't know; but we aren't told that. I don't think it makes much difference it that extra phrase is there or not. But at any rate, what we know for sure is that they are out in the field together.

--- And what happened one day while Cain and Abel were out in the field? ** Cain attacked Abel and killed him

*-- I John 3:11-12 From v. 11, what would have prevented Cain's murdering? ** love for his brother Abel

--- Who did Cain belong to? ** the devil, the wicked one

--- What reason are we given that Cain killed Abel? ** it sounds as if Cain were jealous of Abel's righteousness, or perhaps he was jealous because God considered Abel righteous and not himself

=== But it sounds like jealousy to me.

*-- Gen. 4:9 Who confronts Cain with his crime? ** God

--- Again, does this sound as if God still held direct communication with man? ** yes

--- What did God say to Cain? ** "Where is your brother Abel?"

=== Again, as in the Garden of Eden after eating of the forbidden fruit, God "plays like" He doesn't know what has happened.

--- What did Cain answer? ** "I don't know; am I my brother's keeper?"

--- We can't really know, of course, but on the surface of it, does this sound like a respectful reply? ** no

=== So we find Cain to be a jealous man, a murderer, and a liar.

*-- Gen. 4:10-12 What does God ask Cain? ** "What have you done?"

=== Notice that just as with Adam and Eve when they ate of the fruit, that God is trying to get Cain to admit to what he did.

--- In v. 10, what interesting thing does God say about Abel's blood? ** that the blood cried to God from the ground

--- Now, I presume that is just figurative speaking, but do you remember what God later says about blood when He tells Noah and his sons not to eat blood? ** that the life is in the blood

=== So by saying that the blood cries to God from the ground is like saying that someone's life is lying on the ground and crying out to God.

--- What is to be Cain's punishment for having killed his brother? ** the ground would no longer give Cain food

--- Why did God choose this particular punishment? ** the ground had received Abel's blood by Cain's hand, therefore, the ground would no longer cooperate with Cain to bring forth food

--- What was Cain's occupation before this? ** farmer

--- What curse had Adam had pertaining to the ground? ** it would be cursed and only give food with much work

--- For Adam, which was cursed, Adam or the ground? ** the ground was cursed because of Adam

--- For Cain, which does God say is cursed, Cain or the ground? ** Cain was cursed, not a greater curse on the ground.

=== The ground just seems to be cooperating in the curse that God puts on Cain, but the ground doesn't seem to have received a greater curse itself. Sort of "the punishment fits the crime" sort of thing!

--- Because Cain can no longer be a farmer and raise his food, what is he going to have to do? ** be fugitive and a wanderer

*-- Gen. 4:13-14 Does Cain consider this punishment fair? ** no, he says it's more than he can stand.

--- In v. 14, what 2 things does Cain say will no longer be available to him? ** the soil (to work as a farmer) and the face of God

--- So, again, does it sound as if God had dropped all personal contact with man after the Fall? ** no

=== It sounds to me as if Cain knew God rather well, as if God often had contact with people. They sound on rather familiar terms to me, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it.

--- At the end of v. 14, what do we find out that Cain is afraid will happen? ** that everyone who finds him would try to kill him.

--- Does this perhaps sound as if Cain really knew how serious his murder of Abel was? ** yes

=== It sounds to me as if it were inborn in people to expect to take the life of someone who took somebody else's life.

--- By the way, who would these other people be? ** the brothers and probably nephews of Cain

--- So had Adam and Eve had other children besides Cain and Abel by this time? ** yes

*-- Gen. 4:15 What did God say about Cain's worry of everyone's trying to kill him? ** that God would take sevenfold vengeance on anyone who killed Cain.

--- How could people know or remember that God didn't want them to kill Cain for murdering their brother (or uncle) Abel? ** God put a mark on Cain

--- Are we told what this mark was? ** no

*-- Gen. 4:16-17 In v. 16, what did Cain do after talking to God? ** he went out "from the presence of the Lord" and left the vicinity

--- Where did he then live? ** the land of Nod

=== I've heard that "Nod" means "wandering".

--- Now for the question that unbelievers like to try to stump us on; where did Cain get his wife? ** naturally, it was either his sister or his niece

--- As far as we can tell, God doesn't give commands against marrying a sister until the law of Moses is given; do you remember about how long after Creation that was? ** ** 2500 yrs.

--- In fact, who do we hear about in just a few chapters who marries his half-sister? ** Abraham

=== We have laws against marrying sisters nowadays. But it makes sense. Close relative marriages compound bad genes and lead to all sorts of negative qualities in descendants such as diabetes, insanity, cancer, mental retardation, and many more. We know a family where 1st cousins married, and they had 4 sons -- all retarded, though the parents themselves were normal. But stop and consider. God created man and saw that he was "good". One might almost say that God created man practically perfect. At Creation, man's genes were not yet damaged by the Fall. Early man could afford to intermarry closely, because there wouldn't be the bad genes to double up. This was God's provision for the populating of the earth. As an aside, even as late as the first century B.C. the Ptolomys, the rulers of Egypt were a very superior family, but for 7 generations the king would marry his sister in order to keep his line "pure". Cleopatra (of "Antony and Cleopatra" fame) was the last of the Ptolomy rulers of Egypt, and she was the result of a brother-sister marriage. And there didn't seem to be anything wrong genetically with her (just morally!).

--- Where did Cain now live? ** in a city

--- And where did this city come from? ** Cain built it

--- What did Cain name the city that he built? ** Enoch

--- And where did he get that name? ** named after his son

=== By the way, don't get confused with the name "Enoch" here. In the next chapter we will run across a descendant of Seth who was named "Enoch" also. They are two separate men. The same name is often given to people in the Bible, just as they are today.

=== These next few verses give us a picture of the world before the Flood. So let's go on and look at the few details that God has given us so far about life before the Flood. Let's see if "early man" was just a bunch of cave men going around with clubs and saying "ugh"! We've been over some of this before, but we'll go ahead and review a couple of things.

--- From the first part of this chapter where it tells about Cain and Abel, what 2 professions do we know existed? ** farmers and ranchers (gardeners and herders)

--- Where would people have gotten the "know how" to take care of animals and to grow crops? ** God must have created Adam and Eve with the knowledge of how to take care of animals and plants in the Garden of Eden; they had been on close terms with the animals and had been gardeners in the Garden; they would naturally have carried this knowledge out of the Garden with them and have been using it and teaching it to their children

--- Where did we say that Cain lived after leaving the "presence of the Lord"? ** in a city that he built

--- What skills or occupations would be necessary for a city to be built? ** either the ability to make bricks and a brick mason or stone masons, or a carpenter plus knowing how to make the tools to do this; also some knowledge of architecture

--- So, did everyone live in caves? ** no, here it says that Cain built a city

=== Now, it wouldn't be like New York City, but it was at least a group of buildings or homes. Also, there must have been more than himself and his wife there, because a city isn't usually thought of as just one family!

=== Another thought, if Cain and his family couldn't be farmers, they had to have developed other talents. We're going to look into these in a minute.

--- But how were they going to get food? ** they could barter or perhaps they became merchants and had some sort of credit or "cash" system

*-- Gen. 4:18-19 What social custom do we first find mentioned here? ** polygamy

--- And how many generations (that we know of) did it take from leaving the Garden of Eden for polygamy to develop? ** 7

=== I wouldn't be surprised if polygamy had developed much earlier, but this is the first mention of it.

=== So now we'll look at the genealogy of Cain which will tell us more about life before the Flood.

--- Why won't it be really necessary for us to remember the names? ** no one is descended from Cain now; they all died in the Flood!

=== That would be true of any other of Adam and Eve's descendants, wouldn't it -- except one, whom we will read about in just a minute.

*-- Gen. 4:20 What other kinds of home do we find here? ** tents

--- What kind of skills would the people before the Flood have had to have in order to make a tent? ** (1) skinning an animal, drying or tanning its hide, and sewing them together or (2) making thread or yarn and weaving it into cloth and then sewing it

--- In this verse we again have herding or cattle raising mentioned; why would it have been talked about in the same sentence with tents? ** people with herds are often nomadic and take their homes with them

*-- Gen. 4:21 What things do we have mentioned here? ** stringed and wind musical instruments and musicians.

=== So they were making music, probably not so sophisticated as some of ours, but it was more than just beating a drum!

*-- Gen. 4:22 What else besides cities, tents, cattle herders, farmers, and musicians do we know for sure that they had before the Flood? ** metal and smiths, someone to work with the metals

--- In looking at the type of metal mentioned, what can we deduce about these pre-flood people? ** they not only could mine metal, but they had to have furnaces and smelters and be able to make alloys

--- And then when we come to Noah in a couple of chapters and the building of the ark, what other occupation do we find? ** carpenters

=== Now, all of this has been happening before the Flood. We find that it was a very complex society.

=== Also, it isn't mentioned in the Bible, but there evidently was writing before the Flood also. There have been clay tablets dug up that refer to "the many books before the Flood".

=== So before the Flood we find a complex society. There are cities, tents, probably masons, carpenters, musicians, miners, smelters, metal smiths, cattle herders, all of this within 1600 of Creation. And we also have a murderer, a liar, and a bigamist!

=== There are 8 generations here in this chapter including Adam. It goes from Adam to Cain to Enoch to Irad to Mehujael to Methusael to Lamech to Jabal, Jubal, and Tubalcain.

=== But the Bible continues on with Lamech for another couple of verses. By the way, we'll run into a different Lamech in the next chapter.

*-- Gen. 4:23-24 What else do we know about Lamech from his poem here, besides that he was a bigamist and had very talented sons? ** he sounds like a braggart, possibly a murderer, and certainly had a big chip on his shoulder

--- What, that had happened to one of Lamech's ancestors, did Lamech know about? ** that Cain would be avenged sevenfold if he were killed

*-- Gen. 4:25 Now that the righteous Abel is dead, who does God give as a replacement to carry on the line of righteousness? ** Seth

--- But had Adam and Eve had other children besides just Cain and Abel before Seth? ** yes

--- Again, how do you know this? ** because Cain was worried about people killing him, and also Cain had a wife

=== I don't know just what that says about the other children! But Seth will replace righteous Abel and become the ancestor of Noah and all humanity after the Flood.

--- Who named Seth? ** Eve

=== Seth means "appointed". God had appointed her a son to take Abel's place.

*-- Gen. 5:3 How old was Adam when he had Seth? ** 130 yrs.

--- So what is the longest time it could have been between Creation and when Cain killed Abel? ** 130 years

=== See how easy that was! It is amazing how often seemingly little details like that can answer questions. This doesn't tell us how long they were in the Garden of Eden, but at least we know they hadn't been there hundreds of years.

*-- Gen. 4:26 What was the name of Seth's son? ** Enos

--- What interesting statement in this verse? ** that in the days of Seth's son, men began to call upon the name of the Lord.

=== I really don't know what this means, but I read 2 notes that said it was thought that perhaps organized, public worship, like a church service, started at this time.

REVIEW:

-- Where are Adam and Eve as this chapter opens? ** outside of the Garden of Eden; we aren't told exactly where

-- What happens to Eve in the first of the chapter? ** she has children

-- What are their names? ** Cain and Abel

-- What are their occupations? ** Cain becomes a farmer (gardener) and Abel a rancher (herder)

-- What do they do after a while? ** each bring an offering to the Lord

-- Of what do these offerings consist? ** Cain's is plant life (vegetables or grains or fruits), Abel's firstfruits of his flock

-- Does God accept them both? ** no

-- Which does He accept? ** Abel's

-- Why didn't God accept Cain's? ** we aren't given a lot of details, but we know from the New Testament that Cain's heart wasn't right; he didn't have faith

-- What warning did the Lord give to Cain? ** not to be angry or this might lead him into sin

-- Did Cain heed this advise? ** no

-- What did Cain end up doing? ** killing his brother Abel

-- Who knew about it? ** the Lord, of course!

-- What punishment did the Lord give to Cain for this murder? ** cursed Cain so he couldn't really be a farmer anymore and made a wanderer out of him

-- Did Cain think this was fair? ** he didn't seem to

-- What was Cain afraid would happen to him? ** that people would kill him

-- What people were there on earth besides Adam, Eve, and Cain? ** obviously other children and maybe grandchildren of Adam and Eve

-- How did the Lord prevent this killing of Cain? ** by putting some sort of mark on Cain to warn people not to kill Cain or the Lord would take 7 times as much vengeance on that person
-- Did Cain stay home with his parents then? ** no
-- What did he do? ** he left, had children, and built a city
-- Whom would Cain have married? ** his sister or niece
-- Whose genealogy do we have in this chapter? ** Cain's
-- How many generations do we have listed, starting with Adam? ** 8
-- What kinds of occupations have we found there to have been before the flood? ** gardener and herdsman (farmers and ranchers), miners, metal workers, musicians tent makers, city builders, carpenters
-- What social practice do we find for sure came into being 7 generations from Creation? ** bigamy
-- What son did Adam and Eve have to replace righteous Abel? ** Seth
-- What was the longest period of time it could be between Creation and when Cain killed Abel? ** 130 years (that's how old Adam was when Seth was born)

APPLICATIONS:

** When we sin, our sins affect others.
** When we do something for the Lord, our attitude needs to be correct.
** When we do something for the Lord, we should make sure this is something the Lord wants done.
** We are responsible for what we do.
** When we do something wrong, we shouldn't just expect God to ignore it.
** We shouldn't be take offense easily.
** We shouldn't get angry except in a righteous cause.d
** When we are angry, we should control our actions.
** God is patient.
** Therefore we should use this example and be patient, too.

Chapters 5 & 11: Overlapping the Generations from Adam to Joseph

Adam to Noah

(I'd suggest that you just use the already made chart that's at the end of these three "Chapters 5 & 11" lessons and also at the end of this booklet under Teacher Helps. Then just show how it works. I'll write up what you might say as you explain it. If, however, you want to read the verses as given here and have them do some figuring so that they know what you're doing, I'll go ahead and put in a "lesson" for you. If you want to go ahead and make your own chart as you talk, do so, of course! That would be very good. Do encourage the women that there won't be more complicated lessons like these! If you go through the verses, it may take you 3 lessons, and I've divided this up into separate lessons. However, do with this as you like, skipping great parts if you want.)

== I made the statement that the Flood took place approximately 1650 years after Creation. Today we're going to look at how we get that number of years. When we get through, we will discover something that actually is quite important, in my opinion.

=== Remember our History Time line?

--- How long did the book of Genesis take in that? ** 2400 years

== So the book of Genesis covers over 1/3rd of man's history! Why, the period between Creation and the Flood covers over 1/4th of the history of man -- much, much longer than from the crusades until now! What we're going to do now is to see how some of these figures are gotten -- and gotten accurately.

=== This new timeline is going to show the time period of only the book of Genesis. This new time line is sort of an enlargement of the Genesis line on the old time line. *(Show them Genesis on the first time line you made in previous lessons, so they can see it clearly.)* Anyone confused? There will be some figuring in places for us to do, especially as we get near the end, but I think that if we take it slowly, it shouldn't be confusing. If at any time you feel "lost", please stop me and let me know.

=== We're going to start here. This is the time of Creation. Each little mark here represents 100 years. *(Point to these as you talk.)* These are not B.C. dates. These are how many years after Creation that something occurred; I'm going to call them A.C. (for After Creation) to help us avoid confusion. I've put the B.C. years down here.

*-- Gen. 5:1-5 How long did Adam live altogether? ** 930 years

=== See the "1" here on the left. This shows that this is the first generation after Creation and we will write "ADAM" here, and then draw a line that reaches part way beyond the 900 year mark. This line will represent the entire life of Adam. "930" is written at the end of his "life line". That "930" shows that Adam died 930 years. after Creation. And we've written "930" under "AGE" on the far right. Any questions so far about what we're doing?

--- How old was Adam when he had Seth? ** 130 years

=== *I used a black felt pen to make the grid and write the names, ages, etc. But then I used a green felt pen to make the life lines show up more clearly and a brown felt pen to write down the age when they had the son and the little dotted line down to the next generation.*

=== So we find the part on Adam's "life line" that would show when he was 130 years old, and we'll mark it with a dotted line down to the next line, Seth's line. Do you all follow so far?

=== By the way, there doesn't seem to be any question among "the experts" that the age given when he "begot" his son is the age the man was when his son is born, not 9 months before he's born. And in the scheme of 2000 years or so, I'm also not going to make an issue of it.

There is no fast and hard dogma made surrounding these few years!

*-- Gen. 5:6-8 Who is the 2nd generation after Creation? ** SETH

--- Now where will we start Seth? ** Just down from the 130 year mark on Adam's life line.

--- How old did Seth live to be? ** 912 years

=== So we see the line to represent Seth, that it starts just below Adam's 130 yr mark. The line is drawn for just over 9 of the 100 yr. marks.

=== By the way, the same person who wants to make the 24 hour days of Creation into eons instead of 24 hour years within 365 day years, usually wants to make the years of this genealogy mean something besides 365 day years! Something shorter! However, I see no reason for that, either! God established the seasons on the 4th day of Creation, and if a week were a week then as now, then there is no reason that I can see why the years were any different. I don't think God changed the season and years anddays after creating them.

--- Now, how many years after Creation was Seth born? ** 130

--- And how long did Seth live? ** 912 years

=== So we'll write 912 under "age".

--- So how long after Creation did Seth die? ** 1042 years

=== And the 1042 is marked at the end of Seth's "life line".

=== Any questions so far? Do you all see what we're doing?

--- All right then, how old was Seth when he had his son? ** 105 years

--- And what was the name of his son? ** Enos

--- So who is going to be the 3rd generation? ** Enos

=== That will make Enos the 3rd generation since Creation.

--- Now we need to decide where to start the life line for Enos. How will be do that? ** Come down from Seth's 105th year of life.

--- How far does that put Enos from Creation? ** 130 + 105 = 235 years

*-- Gen. 5:9-11 And how long did Enos live? ** 905 years

=== So we will go just over 900 years on our time line, starting at 235.

--- How long after Creation, then, did Enos die? ** 235 + 905 = 1140

--- And how old was Enos when he had his son, Cainan? ** 90 years

=== See how nice this 5th chapter is? We don't have to add "Let's see, he was 90 when he had his son, Cainan, and he lived 815 more years, that makes 90 + 815 = 905 years old." The Bible does the adding for us in this chapter!

--- So what is the name of the man in the 4th Generation? ** CAINAN

*-- Gen. 5:12-14 How long did Cainan live and where do we start with his life line? ** 910 years; we start just under Enos's 90 yr mark

--- How long after Creation was Cainan born? ** @ 325 years after

--- And how long after Creation did Cainan die? ** @ 1235 years after

--- How old was Cainan when he had his son, Mahalaleel? ** 70 years

(Repeat these steps with the other generations through Noah's birth and death.)

*-- Gen. 5:15-17 Mahalaleel

*-- Gen. 5:18-20 Jared

*-- Gen. 5:21-24 Enoch

--- Have we ever heard the name "Enoch" before? ** yes, it was the name of Cain's son

=== But, again, the same name was used for more than one person. Just as is done today.

--- What unusual thing happened to Enoch? ** he didn't die

--- Why not? ** because God "took" him

--- What kind of man was Enoch? ** very godly

--- How long did Enoch live here on earth? ** 365

=== I don't make anything out of it, but I find it interesting how long Enoch lived -- 365, the same as the days of the year! At any rate, it makes it easy to remember!

--- So how long after Creation did the Lord take him to heaven? ** 987 years

--- And how old was Enoch when he had Methuselah? ** 65

(Continue as before.)

*-- Gen. 5:25-27 Methuselah

=== My son who has studied Hebrew for several years says that the Hebrew words that make of this name are literally "his death sent" (or "sends"). But sent or sends what? It is taken by nearly everyone that this is referring to the Flood. In fact, my Bible has a footnote that says the names means "after me the deluge" or "after me, the sending of waters." That the Flood will be sent after Methuselah's death. We know from the book of Jude that his father was a prophet. Did Methuselah's prophet father name him that as a prophecy of the Flood?

*-- Gen. 5:28-31 Lamech

--- Again, have we heard the name of "Lamech" before? ** yes, he was the descendant of Cain who was the bragging bigamist.

--- What did Lamech name his son? ** Noah

=== "Noah" means "comfort".

--- But why does this say that Noah was named "Comfort?" ** because he would comfort people because of all the hard work involved with the cursed ground

=== So it sound as if perhaps Lamech were a prophet, too, doesn't it?

=== Now we need to skip over a bit to find out how long Noah lived.

*-- Gen. 9:28-29 How long did Noah live? ** 950 years

=== O.K., now let's find out when the Flood came.

*-- Gen 7:6 How old was Noah when the Flood began? ** 600 years

--- How long after Creation was Noah born? ** 1056 years after Creation

--- How long after Creation did Noah die? ** 2016 years after

--- So how long after Creation was the Flood? ** 600 + 1056 = 1656 years A.C.

=== And that would make it about 2344 B.C.

=== See how these things can be done? God has given us all sort of supposedly "unnecessary" details in the Bible. But they aren't unnecessary. We'll get into that more just a little later on.

--- A thing of interest -- how long after Creation did Methuselah die? ** 1656 after Creation

=== So Methuselah died the year of the Flood!

=== Again, the name "Methuselah" seems means "After me, the deluge".

--- So did Methuselah die in the Flood? ** no, just before it ("After me...")

=== And, again, it sounds like either his father Enoch had named Methuselah that as a prophesy, or that Methuselah had renamed himself that as a prophesy.

=== Do you see how much can come out of just a seemingly meaningless and boring list of names and ages?

--- By the way, are these men that are listed here necessarily the oldet sons? ** no

--- How do you know? ** because Seth certainly wasn't!

=== All right, now let's look at something else we can get from these dates and ages.

--- How many generations do we have from Adam to the Flood? ** 10

=== In 10 generations one would think that details of the Garden of Eden and the Fall might get all garbled. But would they? Have you ever told your children stories that your Grandmother or Grandfather told you about their own parents? I certainly have. And that would be a jump of 5 generations! So let's see how many generational "jumps" there really are between Adam and Noah.

=== Let's just gather facts for a moment and then afterwards make our conclusions.

--- Adam died how long after Creation? ** 930 years

(Let them look at the chart. And point things out as you go along.)

--- How many generations of his descendants might he have talked with? ** Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah and Lamech -- that makes 8 generations that Adam could have talked to.

--- How many direct ancestors of Noah could Adam not have talked with? ** none!

=== So Adam could have talked with all Noah's direct ancestors! Including Noah's father! That doesn't mean that Adam did, it just means if was completely possible. And can you imagine Adam's not talking about all of that to everyone who would listen?!

--- Now, before we go looking too closely at things from that direction, let's see how many generations of his ancestors Noah himself could have talked with about anything at all? ** Noah could have talked with 6 generations of his ancestors: Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Methuselah, and his own father Lamech.

--- Which of his direct ancestors could Noah not have been able to talk with? ** only 3 of them: Adam, Seth, and Enoch!

=== So let's make some conclusions here: If Adam had talked only with Noah's grandfather Methuselah, Grandpa Methuselah could have told Noah about the Garden of Eden, etc., things he could have gotten from Adam himself! But Adam could have talked with any or all of 6 of Noah's direct ancestors who would have been living at the time of Noah, that is, 5 ancestors besides his grandfather Methuselah. Then any one of these (or all!) could have talked with Noah and said, "Yes, Adam told me all about the Garden of Eden (or the Fall, or any number of other things), and it was like this......" It would be exactly like your telling your child something that your mother or father told you about their childhood! Mind boggling, isn't it?! And if you have multiple witnesses that relate the same details, then it would be the truth.

=== Noah could have known (and probably did, knowing people) all sorts of details about the Garden of Eden and the Fall, and Cain's killing Abel, and all of the rest; and he would have heard them 2nd hand: Adam to whoever to Noah. That's not very many generational jumps. I think of all of the things that my grandfather told me about his family that were very real to me that I'm now passing on to my children (and grandchildren); and I'm sure most of you can do the same. And then Noah could have been able to pass on a 3rd hand account of these events (-- just like your daughter telling someone something that you yourself told her about your own mother's childhood.)

=== But that's not all of the picture. There is after the Flood. We'll find out some more interesting things now and tie them all together. So next time we're going to take up where we left off on the genealogies given in the book of Genesis, chapter 5. These will cover the entire period of Genesis, clear up to the last chapter.

REVIEW:

-- How many generations from Adam to the Flood? ** 10

-- To how many of these generations could Adam have spoken and told about the Garden of Eden, etc.? ** 9 of them

-- From how many of these generations could Noah have gotten a 2nd hand report of the Garden of Eden, the Fall, etc.? ** 6 of them

-- Why is this of any importance? ** it shows that an accurate account of everything Adam and Eve went through could easily have been passed down to Noah (and, remember, we have ancient references to writings before the Flood)

APPLICATIONS:

** Even the seemingly unimportant, boring details in the Bible may actually be important.
** God kept accurate records.
** This shows that Creation wouldn't have been tens of thousands of years ago.

Noah to Terah

=== Last time we looked at Gen. 5 and the genealogies in it. We found some very interesting things. Today we're going to go on with more genealogies.

=== But first, some people might say, "Why on earth are you bothering with all of that? That isn't important." Or is it?

*-- II Timothy 3:16-17 What does God say about all of the parts of the Bible? ** that they are all inspired by God and that it is all profitable -- for doctrine, reproof, correction, and for learning how to be righteous.

=== So we should study all of the Bible as much as we can. We never know when something we have studied won't be just what we need to help us in some time of need or sorrow or doubt. Or that we can use to help someone else.

=== Remember, we saw earlier that these ages that we've had so far are of importance.

--- What did we find out that made us think all of these numbers were important after all? ** they show us that the Bible can well be reliable despite what people say; that Adam could have talked to all of Noah's direct ancestors (let alone uncles, etc) about the Garden of Eden, walking with God in the cool of the evening, the Fall, and many, many other things. These people could then have talked to Noah and given him their 2nd hand account of all of these events. And we can be sure that Noah heard them many times, probably from many different people.

=== This knocks in the head the idea that all of these facts couldn't be passed on accurately for 10 generations to reach Noah, doesn't it? Now we're going to take it from there.

=== But first, there are some people who say, "Yes, God created everything in 6 literal days, but He did the creating at 10,000 B.C., not at 4000 B.C." Even some very good Christians have said that, and you may hear it. So let's see why they say that. The "10,000 years B.C." people say that the first 10 or so generations before the Flood are dynasties. They say, "Why, no one could live 960 years; those were dynasties, like the Ming dynasty in China, and the like." So these people disregard the words "....he begot...." or "....he had a son named....". Instead, they add together the different ages (like of Adam + Seth + Enos, etc.) This puts many thousands more years that the world has been around. Do you understand what I'm saying? Of course, they don't do that with some of the later generations! They just sort of pick and choose.

--- But does God give us any reason here in Genesis to think that He (God) meant dynasties rather than exactly what He said, that so-and-so became the father of this-or-that-one at such-and-such an age and lived blank amount more years? ** no

=== The King James even says "begot" rather that "became the father of" which is even more specific.

--- Would God have been capable of stating a dynasty instead of a father-son relationship? ** yes

=== And, remember, Methuselah's name means "After me, the deluge" or "sending of waters", so he couldn't have been a dynasty that I can see! There would have been a 777 year dynasty in between him and the birth of Noah! And then would Noah also have been a dynasty????

*-- Gen. 9:18 Could Noah have been a dynasty and then Shem another dynasty? ** no

--- Why not? ** because this says that Shem came out of the ark

--- And had Noah been in the ark? ** yes

=== Saying that these are dynasties just doesn't make sense, does it?! Where do you stop? Was Abraham a dynasty? Or Isaac. I don't think You can pick and choose with the Bible. You accept it or you don't.

=== To come up with a 10 or 12,000 year history of man, rather than a 6000 year history can only be done by ignoring God's actual words and twisting His words around to mean something they don't say. It is done because well-meaning (I hope!) people either just heard it from some "authority" and accepted it, or because they don't quite believe that God really meant what He said when He said people lived several hundred years. (Just as some people don't think God really meant a literal day in the Creation account.) But why couldn't they have lived that long? After all, Adam came "perfect" from the hand of God -- no defective genes to give him cancer or diabetes or heart trouble. Adam had been made to live forever (with, evidently, the tree of life to help!), until he ate of the forbidden fruit. So the otherwise sound Christian who says that Creation was 10,000 years B.C. is actually doubting, not only God's ability to speak clearly in Genesis, but also God's ability to have people live several hundred years.

=== My way of dealing with the Bible has been always to figure that God meant what He said whenever possible. The Bible says that God created everything in 6 days, "6 evenings and 6 mornings". What is so difficult in believing that it was really 6 days. Is God incapable of doing it?! The Bible says Jonah was in the belly of the fish 3 days and 3 nights. Why not believe that it was a literal 3 days and 3 nights. Couldn't God arrange that? God's word says that Jesus was in the tomb 3 days and 3 nights "like Jonah". Why not believe that God meant just exactly what He said, that Jesus was in the tomb 3 days and 3 nights. The Bible says the Flood covered the whole world. Why decide that it must have been a local flood? Would God have been incapable of making a flood that covered the whole world?

=== Why do we often attempt to "shorten God's arm", make Him less powerful or less truthful than He is? Why not, whenever possible, just take Him at His word? It is really much easier that way. Remember, the Bible says we are to be as little children. The Bible wasn't written to be some big super-intellectual puzzle with nothing meaning what it says. It was mostly written to be understood. So if we have "ears to hear", let's just go ahead and take God seriously when He says something and not try to twist everything. That's certainly what we'd want our own children to do if we told them something!

=== But I am not saying that God doesn't have some figurative language in the Bible. He certainly does! But it's usually (if not always) very clear that it's figurative -- and usually it's explained.

=== So now let's go on with Noah! We have Noah living to be 950 years old.

(Here you will be going on with the rest of the overlapping-generations chart.)

*-- Gen. 5:32 How old was Noah when he started having his sons? ** 500

=== But this doesn't necessarily mean that Shem, Ham, and Japheth were triplets. We're going to be following the line of Shem

--- Why Shem? ** because the Jews are descended from him, and the Bible is a Jewish book; and, of course, Jesus would be descended from Shem

=== So let's start Shem in on our chart as generation #11. But we'll need to do some figuring before we put down how old Noah was when he had Shem.

=== Here we're going to have to skip over to Genesis 11 to get more genealogies. We'll come back and fill in the other chapters later.

*-- Gen 11:10-11 How long after the Flood was Shem's son born? ** 2 years after.

--- And how old was Shem when he had his son? ** 100 years

*-- Gen. 7:6 How old did we say Noah was when the Flood came? ** 600 years

--- So how old would Noah be 2 years after the Flood? ** 602 years

--- Now, if Shem was 100 years old, 2 years after the Flood, how old would Noah have been 100 years earlier when Shem was born? ** 502 years

=== That wasn't really hard, was it!? So we have put Shem as starting at Noah's 502 year mark. Now, I realize that we don't know for sure if the "2 years after the Flood" meant 2 years after the Flood began or 2 years after the Flood ended. And the Flood lasted a whole year, though my guess would be 2 years after it ended. So we may be a year off in our figuring of the age of Noah when he had Shem. However, I'm not going to make a fuss (or a doctrine!) out of that 1 year.

=== The verse that says Noah was 500 years old could only have meant that Noah was 500 when he started having the 3 sons listed. The Bible doesn't tell us if Noah had other children who were lost in the Flood. Perhaps he did, or perhaps he and his wife could have no children up until he was 500 and then all he had were the 3 sons. We just aren't told.

=== OK, let's go on with Shem. Now you notice that here we are going to have to do our own adding up to get how long the people lived after the Flood.

--- From Gen. 11:10-11, how old did we say that Shem was when he had his son? ** 100 years

(Point out the lines down to the children, just like you did before the Flood.)

--- And how long did Shem live after he had his son? ** 500 years

--- So how long did Shem live in total? ** 100 + 500 = 600 years

--- So how many years after Creation was Shem born? ** 1056 + 502 = 1558 A.C.

=== Remember, these aren't the B.C. years. They're A.C. years, the "After Creation" years.

--- And how many years after Creation did Shem die? ** 2158 A.C.

=== Now, we have a potential problem here when we get to Arphaxad. I realize that Luke 3 (with the genealogy of Mary) and the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament both have an extra generation in here at this point. They both say that Arphaxad had Cainan and then Cainan had Salah. The Septuagint was a Greek translation of the Old Testament made before Christ from the Hebrew text.

--- Why would they have wanted a Greek translation of the Old Testament? ** because Greek was the universal language; Greece had ruled the known world and spread the Greek language

--- Now, was Luke a Jew or a Gentile? ** gentile

--- So would he have been able to go back to original Hebrew texts? ** no

=== So Luke probably used the Septuagint and picked up the extra generation from there. But the Hebrew text itself doesn't have this extra generation. And other translations don't either, so my guess is that the translators of the Septuagint made a mistake. However, I frankly don't think that one extra generation should make much difference here. By the way, the Septuagint also messes up all of the ages! It adds 100 years here and subtracts 100 years there! So we're going to ignore the Septuagint and take it as all of the other translations have it.

*-- Gen. 11:12-13 How old was Shem's son Arphaxad when he had his son, Salah? ** 35 years

--- How long did Arphaxad live after he had Salah? ** 403 years

--- How old did Arphaxad live to be? ** 438 years

--- How long after Creation was Arphaxad born? ** 1658 A.C.

--- And how long after Creation did Arphaxad die? ** 2196 A.C.

(Continue doing this with the rest up to Terah.)

*-- Gen. 11:14-15 Salah

*-- Gen. 11:16-17 Eber

*-- Gen. 11:18-19 Peleg

*-- Gen. 11:20-21 Reu

*-- Gen. 11:22-23 Serug

*-- Gen. 11:24-25 Nahor

=== We'll stop here for this lesson, since we're going to have to do figuring before we can go much further.

APPLICATIONS:

** We should take the word of God as it's written.
** When an expression is repeated over and over, we should pay attention to it.
** We can find out things in the Bible from seemingly unnecessary fact just with a little digging around.

Terah to Joseph

=== We're working on our chart of the overlapping generations in Genesis that go all the way from Adam through Joseph. Up to this point we've found these in Gen. 5 and 11. And so far we've had the ages listed for us in an easy way except for Noah's age when he had Shem. But from now on we're going to have to do some digging and figuring. I think you'll find it interesting, though. Especially when you see the completed chart. We've gotten up to Nahor here.

We're going to review the last person we had last week in order to get a continuity here.

*-- Gen. 11:24 Who is the son of Nahor? ** Terah

*-- Gen 11:32 How long did Terah live? ** 205 years

--- From looking at our chart, how long after Creation was Terah born? ** 1878 years after

--- And how long after Creation did Terah die? ** 2,083

*-- Gen. 11:26 What were the names of Terah's sons? ** Abram, Nahor, and Haran

--- After whom was one of Terah's sons named? ** after Terah's own father, Nahor

=== We'll run into these names later in Genesis. Nahor was the father of Laban and Rebecca. And Haran was the father of Lot.

--- But which son are we mainly interested in here? ** Abram

--- By the way, who is "Abram"; what was his other name? ** Abraham

=== Yes, God later changed Abram's name to Abraham.

--- From v. 26, how old would we first think that Terah was when he had Abram? ** 70

=== But let's look at it some more, since there are 3 sons given here. Abram, Nahor, and Haran weren't triplets. Here we come to the same difficulty that we had when Noah had his 3 sons when he was 500 years old. It seems that when several sons are mentioned at once, that it refers to the man's age when he has the oldest son. But then it lists the sons with first the name of the one that we're going to be concerned with, the most important one in God's eyes, even if he's not the oldest son. With Noah's sons we were only really concerned with Shem.

--- Why? ** he was the ancestor of Jesus

=== And here were only really going to be interested in Abraham.

--- Again, why? ** because Abraham was the ancestor of Jesus

=== So let's look into Terah and his son Abram.

=== Again, I'm not going to base any doctrine on this age of Terah's, but we should always strive to be accurate. When I first made a chart like this back over 35 years ago, I took it to our old pastor to make sure I had it accurately before teaching it or giving out a handout (I always did that). And I had Terah as being 70 when he had Abram. My pastor caught me on that and I had to redo the chart! God often gives us information that we have to dig for! So let's start digging! By the way, the charts in the booklets I've given to you will not have these references, so if you are interested in them, you'll either have to ask me for them or dig them out on your own. But now on to our detective work!

*-- Acts 7:2-4 After what event did Abraham go into the present day land of Palestine (which is called "Canaan" in the earlier books of the Bible), v. 4? ** after his father Terah died

=== By the way, according to the New Testament, Abraham's father Terah and grandfather Nahor were both idolaters!

--- About how long after the flood was Abraham? ** about 400 years

=== So in 400 years after all mankind except 8 people were wiped out because of the wickedness of mankind, they had already gone into idolatry!

*-- Gen. 12:4-5 How old was Abraham when he went to the land of Canaan? ** 75 years old

--- How old have we already established that Terah was when he died (Gen. 11:32)? ** 205

--- So, if Abraham was 75 when his father Terah died, then how old was Terah when Abraham was born? ** 130 years old (205 - 75 = 130)

--- How long was that after Creation? ** 2008 A.C.

=== Now, that really wasn't so hard, was it?! And by digging this out, we avoided a 60 year error. Of course, Abraham may have left a year or so after his father died, but it was probably fairly soon afterwards. A year or 2 might not make much difference, but 60 years would.

=== Remember our History Time Line?

--- How long had we said the "B.C." period was, the time from Creation to Christ? ** 4000 years

--- And what had we used to mark the middle of the B.C. period, 2000 B.C.? ** Abraham

=== And here Abraham is at approximately 2000 A.C. which would also be approximately 2000 B.C., which shows we had a right to use him as our memory aid to chop the Old Testament in half, didn't we?!

=== We can see that at least one of Abraham's brothers was much older than he -- 60 years older! Of course, Terah may have had quite a few other children in between who aren't mentioned at all. We just aren't told. Actually though, we do know of one other child Terah had, Sarah! She was Abraham's half-sister! But let's go on.

*-- Gen 25:7 How old did Abraham live to be ? ** 175 years

--- Do you remember whether Abraham had more than one son? ** yes, he did

=== In fact, Abraham eventually had 8 sons in total, didn't he? Ishmael, Isaac, and 6 sons by Keturah after Sarah died.

--- But who is the only son of Abraham that we're really interested in, the one who is the ancestor of the 12 tribes of Israel, of David and of Jesus? ** Isaac

*-- Gen. 21:5 How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? ** 100 years

--- So we will start Isaac right here; and how long after Creation is this? ** 2108 A.C.

*-- Gen. 35:28 How long did Isaac live? ** 180 years

--- How long is this after Creation? ** 2288 A.C.

--- Who will be Isaac's son that we're interested in? ** Jacob

--- And why are we interested in Jacob? ** because he's the beginning of the 12 tribes of Israel and the ancestor of Jesus

*-- Gen 25:26 How old was Isaac when his son was born? ** 60 years

--- So we start Jacob here at how long after Creation? ** 2168 A.C.

=== By the way, no one says that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dynasties! To make the Gen. 5 ancestors of Abraham be dynasties would be a matter of picking and choosing, these are dynasties but these aren't. And I don't think it is a fair thing to do.

*-- Gen. 47:28 How long did Jacob live? ** 147 years

--- How long after Creation did Jacob die? ** 2315 A.C.

=== It tells about the birth of 11 of Jacob's sons in Gen. 30, but I'm not going to have us read that. Instead I'm going to jump ahead to what I consider the next step here.

*-- Gen. 50:26 What event closes the book of Genesis? ** the death of Joseph

--- I don't think we need to look it up, so I'll just ask you; who was Joseph's father? ** Jacob

=== So now I'm going to use Joseph as the son of Jacob to complete our chart. Of course, all of the sons of Jacob except Benjamin were born within a 12 year period while Jacob was with his Uncle Laban after working 7 years for his wives. So I don't think we need to be concerned which son we use. Of course, Joseph is not the ancestor of Jesus, but I'm using him because his death so neatly closes the book of Genesis. There are actually ages given for the deaths of Levi and his descendants up to the birth of Moses! But not for the ages when they had their sons. But we'll look at this another time when we get to the book of Exodus. So let's look at Joseph here.

=== But now we come to a little problem. We can only say within a few year period when Jacob's son Joseph is born, the son whose death marks the end of the book of Genesis. But I really think that we can get it with a give or take of only 1 to 3 years.

=== Now, I don't want to wear you out, so at this point I'm going to give you a choice. Either I can tell you the approximate age of Jacob when Joseph is born, or we can figure it out together. Which do you want to do? It would take a few steps to figure, but I would prefer that we do it together just so you can see not only how it's done, but that we can see unexpected things if we look carefully at the Bible. God has given us more information than appears on the surface!

(Here give them the choice. I've given both "just the telling" and all of the steps below.)

First, just the telling:

=== O.K., I'll tell you then, and we'll just go on from there. Jacob was approximately 91 when Joseph was born. That is, in my opinion, give or take 1-3 years

But then if you figure the steps:

=== Okay, to figure this out, we're going to have to look at some seemingly unrelated things. But they are related! We're going to start when Joseph is in Egypt. I know you're familiar with how he got there, so we won't go into that now.

*-- Gen 41:28-30 What did the king's dream mean? ** 7 years of plenty and 7 of famine

*-- Gen 41:32 When would this start happening? ** "very soon"

*-- Gen 41:46 How old was Joseph when he stood before Pharaoh, telling the king the dream and what it meant? ** 30 years

*-- Gen 45:3, 6 At least how many years have passed since Joseph told Pharaoh the dream? ** 7 years of plenty + 2 years of famine = 9 years

--- Now this is where the problem comes in. We don't know how long it was from the time that Joseph told Pharaoh the dream until the 7 years of plenty started. But it was to be "soon". I think that we could probably say that it was from immediately to maybe 3 years until the 7 years of plenty started.

--- Now how old did we say Joseph was when he first told Pharaoh the dream (Gen. 41:46)? ** 30

--- In which case, how old would Joseph probably have been when he revealed himself to his brothers? ** probably from 39 to @ 42 years old (30 + @9 = @39)

=== Now, remember that Joseph, after revealing himself to his brothers, sent for his father, and the whole family came down into Egypt. It would have taken several months for the brothers to return to Canaan and get their families and then return to Egypt. And this was the beginning of the time of the children of Israel's being in Egypt.

*-- Gen 47:7-9 This takes place when Jacob first goes down into Egypt. How old was Jacob at this time? ** 130 years

--- So we have Jacob 130 years old when he first comes to Egypt. How old did we say Joseph was when he revealed himself to his brothers? ** about 39 to 42

=== Let's take him as about 39 years.

--- So approximately how much older was Jacob than his son, Joseph? ** about 91 years older (88 to 91 years, I'm sure) (130 - 39 = @91)

=== So that gives us the place (give or take) where to start Joseph's life. That wasn't so hard, was it?! And it just shows what we can do if we really study the Bible! Even if we can't be exact, we can be very close.

--- How long would that be after Creation? ** 2259 +/- A.C.

(End of the steps to find out Jacob's age at Joseph's birth.)

*-- Gen. 50:26 How long did Joseph live to be? ** 110 years

--- And how long after Creation was that? ** 2369 A.C.+/-

=== And there we have the end of the book of Genesis. This is a 50 chapter book that covers over 1/3rd of the history of mankind.

=== Now why would God bother giving us these ages? He doesn't do it elsewhere in the Bible, so I think that there was a purpose to this. God doesn't seem to me to bother with just useless information. I truly believe that He expected us to use these ages to figure out about the things we've just been working with. So let's think about it. Let's look and see what we can come up with that makes all of these ages and this chart at all worth while.

--- How many "jumps" did we say that we could make between Adam and Noah for Noah to hear about the Garden of Eden? ** 2 jumps: Adam to Methuselah, etc. to Noah

--- Now let's take it some steps further. Who could have told the 2nd hand account of the Garden of Eden, etc. to Noah's son, Shem? (Here is where I think the "A.C." [After Creation] dates come in handy!) ** 2 people, Methuselah and Lamech

=== So we still have this a 2nd hand account about the Garden of Eden and the Fall for Shem, right? And a 1st hand account of Enoch!

--- Now, how long after Creation did we say Shem died? ** 2158 years A.C.

=== Now, a 3rd hand account is like your children telling someone something that you told them that your mother told you. And here's the real mind-blower.

--- To whom could Shem have talked with a 3rd hand account of the Garden of Eden, walking with God in the cool of the evening, the Fall, etc., and 2nd hand account of Enoch, and a 1st hand account of the building of the ark and the Flood?! ** Shem could have talked to 10 generations of his descendants, Arphaxad through Isaac!

--- And do you remember from our other timeline what big event happened between the Flood and Abraham? ** the tower of Babel and the confusion of languages

--- Would Shem probably have been near the Tower of Babel and been there when the languages were confused? ** yes

--- Why do you say that? ** because people weren't spreading out, and after the languages were confused by God, they began spreading out over the earth

=== So Abraham and Isaac could have heard 3rd hand from Shem himself all of Adam's stories and then a 1st hand about the Flood and the tower of Babel!! If that doesn't blow your mind, I don't know what would! 3 "jumps" for Adam's stories, and only 1 for the Flood and the tower of Babel!

=== By the way, I am not saying that Shem actually talked to Abraham and Isaac, especially not to Isaac. I am saying it was possible. My guess would be that he did not talk to Isaac.

--- But where had Abraham come from originally? ** Ur of the Chaldees, over in the area of the Tower of Babel

=== We don't know for sure where Shem lived out his life. From where his descendants lived according to Gen. 10, my guess would be that Shem lived around the area of the Fertile Crescent. But that's only my guess. But wherever he lived, you know good and well that Shem must have talked to many, many people of those 10 generations of his descendants. And Abraham for many years was over in Ur in the general area of where the people settled after the Flood, so I think there was a very good chance that he did hear Shem talk. But I certainly wouldn't be dogmatic about it. We have to be careful not to say that something is so just because we "think" it might be. But let's go on.

=== If we check further on our chart, we see that Isaac didn't die until long after Jacob had brought his wives and sons (including Joseph) back from Uncle Laban's and was living with or near his father Isaac.

--- In fact, how old did we say that Joseph was when he stood before Pharaoh and told the king his dream? (Gen.41:46) ** 30

=== We know from the Bible that before that time Joseph had served long enough in Potiphar's house to be a trusted servant and in charge of everything, and then to have been in jail over 2 years

--- Joseph was born right around 2259 A.C.; how many years after Creation would the 30 year old Joseph have been standing before Pharaoh? ** @ 2289 A.C.

--- And when A.C. did Isaac die? ** 2288 A.C.

--- So even allowing for a few years plus or minus on Joseph's birth date of 2259 A.C., would Isaac still have been alive when Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brothers? ** yes

=== Gen. 37:27 tells us that Jacob went to Isaac his father in Mamre. Very likely Jacob was living at least near (if not with) his father. So I think there is a 98% certainty that Isaac knew about Joseph's disappearance.

--- So in all probability Joseph and all of his brothers heard all sorts of stories from Isaac that Isaac had heard from either Abraham or earlier generations, stories about Eden and the tower of Babel and the Flood. Remember Abraham had originally come from the general vicinity of Babel.

*-- Gen. 50:22-23 To whom could Joseph have told the stories that his grandfather Isaac had told him? ** Joseph could have told his great-grandchildren

=== And, knowing people, he probably did tell them -- repeatedly!

=== So the children of Israel when they had been 3 generations in Egypt could have heard the stories of the Garden of Eden, etc. and the Flood from Joseph and his brothers (and we know that Levi lived 37 years longer than Joseph!).

*-- Gal. 3:16-17 How long was it from the giving of the covenant to Abraham until the law was given to Moses? ** 430 years

*-- Gen. 15:13-16 We're not going to go into it now, but taking the verses in Galatians in consideration, and according to v. 16, how many generations will they be in Egypt? ** 4

=== We'll go into this in detail later.

--- And to how many generations of his own descendants could Joseph have told these things? ** 3

=== We'll drop that particular thought for now and take it up again later when we get to the book of Exodus. But sort of let that rattle around in your minds!

=== So Joseph and his brothers could have had the story of the Garden of Eden 4th hand. And they could have passed on to their great-grandchildren these things that they probably heard from Isaac, who would have heard them from Abraham, who probably talked to Shem (or heard him talk) who had been through the Flood, and Shem himself had probably heard about the Garden of Eden from his own grandfather who'd heard it from Adam!!!

== Now what have we really accomplished? Has this all been "vain genealogies", or is there a good reason for what we've been doing? Well, I'd say there was a good reason if only simply because God saw fit carefully to give us this information, but that reason wouldn't satisfy many people! So let's see if there are any others reasons.

-- If a person takes the Bible as being true, what do these dates we've been working with do with the idea that Creation was millions of years ago? ** these dates knock the "eons idea" into a cocked hat -- we've just taken man's history clear up into known Egyptian history

-- What does this do to the idea that the "stories" couldn't have been preserved through 25 generations; were there 25 "jumps"? ** no

=== And, remember, there are only about 60-80 years between the death of Joseph until the birth of Moses! And Moses is the one who wrote all of this down (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit).

=== As I said before, I have told my grandchildren stories that my grandfather told me that he heard from his parents. It's the same kind of thing as what we're discussing here!

APPLICATIONS:

** When God says something, we should take it for what it says and not twist it around.

** The story of the Garden of Eden, the Fall, the Flood, and the Tower of Babel could easily have been passed down through many generations until written down.

** We can trust the Bible.

Read the following page of "Interesting Thoughts" aloud to the class.

A Summary of Interesting Thoughts About Genesis 5 & 11

1. These chapters with their genealogies help date Creation and disprove evolution to those who have "ears to hear".

2. Adam could have talked about the Garden of Eden, walking with God in the cool of the evening, and the Fall, as well as Cain's killing Abel, with all of the generations up to and including Lamech, the father of Noah (8 generations of descendants).

3. Noah could have talked with all of his direct ancestors (except Enoch) clear back to Enos (6 generations of ancestors).

4. Noah could have talked with all generations after him up to and including Terah the father of Abraham (9 generations of descendants).

5. Abraham could have talked with all direct ancestors except Peleg and Nahor back to and including Shem (who went through the Flood himself) (7 generations of direct ancestors) (and remember, his early life was in Mesopotamia, where civilization restarted after the Flood). Then Abraham could have told these things to Isaac and Jacob.

6. Shem could have talked with all generations from Methuselah (his grandfather) down to Isaac (who came 10 generations after Shem). Shem died only 10 years before Jacob and Esau were born! (I'd doubt if Shem actually did talk to Isaac, but I'm sure he talked with Abraham.)

I KNOW THAT "COULD" DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY DID TALK TO THESE PEOPLE. It only means that there was the distinct possibility and that there were all sorts of overlapping generations for literally centuries.

IN SUMMARY:

1. Adam lived in the Garden of Eden, talked with God, caused the Fall of Man...

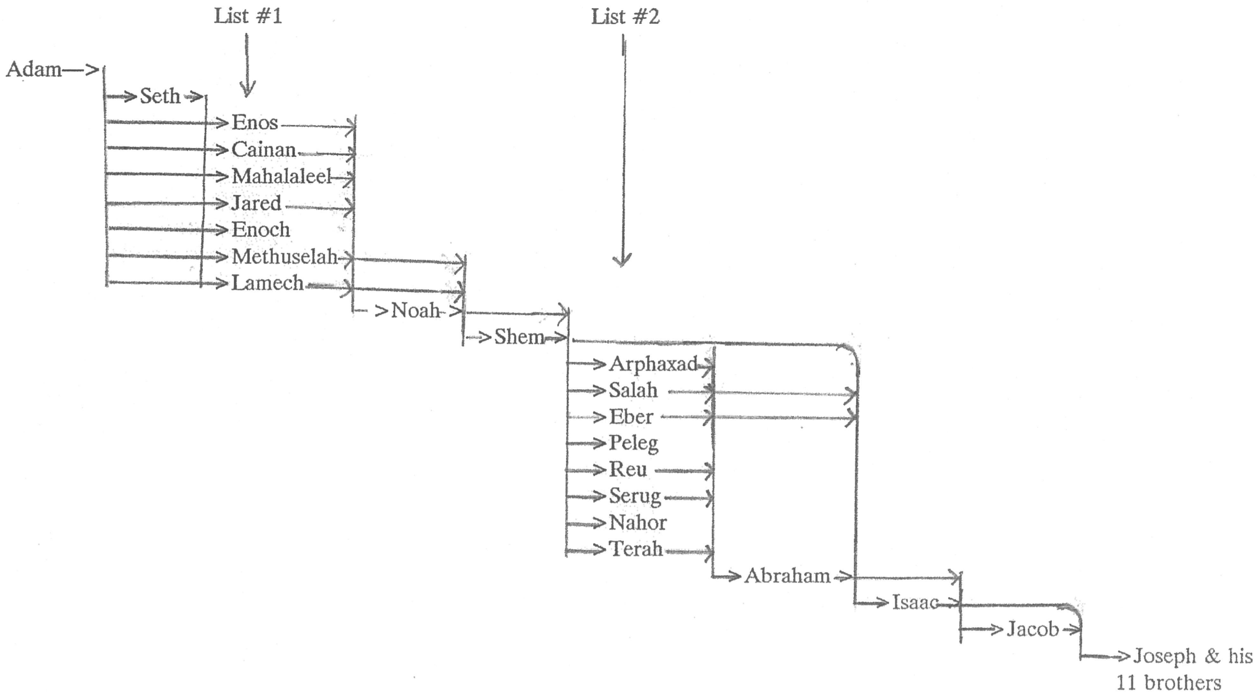
Methuselah . . . . could have had a 1st hand account of the Garden, etc.
Shem . . . . could have had a 2nd hand account of the Garden, etc.
Isaac . . . . could have had a 3rd hand account of the Garden, etc.
Joseph and his brothers . . . . could have had a 4th Hand account of the Garden, etc.

2. Shem went through the Flood and probably helped build the ark...

Isaac . . . . could have had a 1st hand account of the Flood
Joseph and his brothers . . . . could have had a 2nd hand account of the Flood

ALSO:
Joseph saw the 3rd generation of the children of Israel as they lived in Egypt (Gen. 50:23). He could have given his great-grandchildren a 5th hand account of the Garden of Eden, etc. and 3rd hand account of the Flood!!

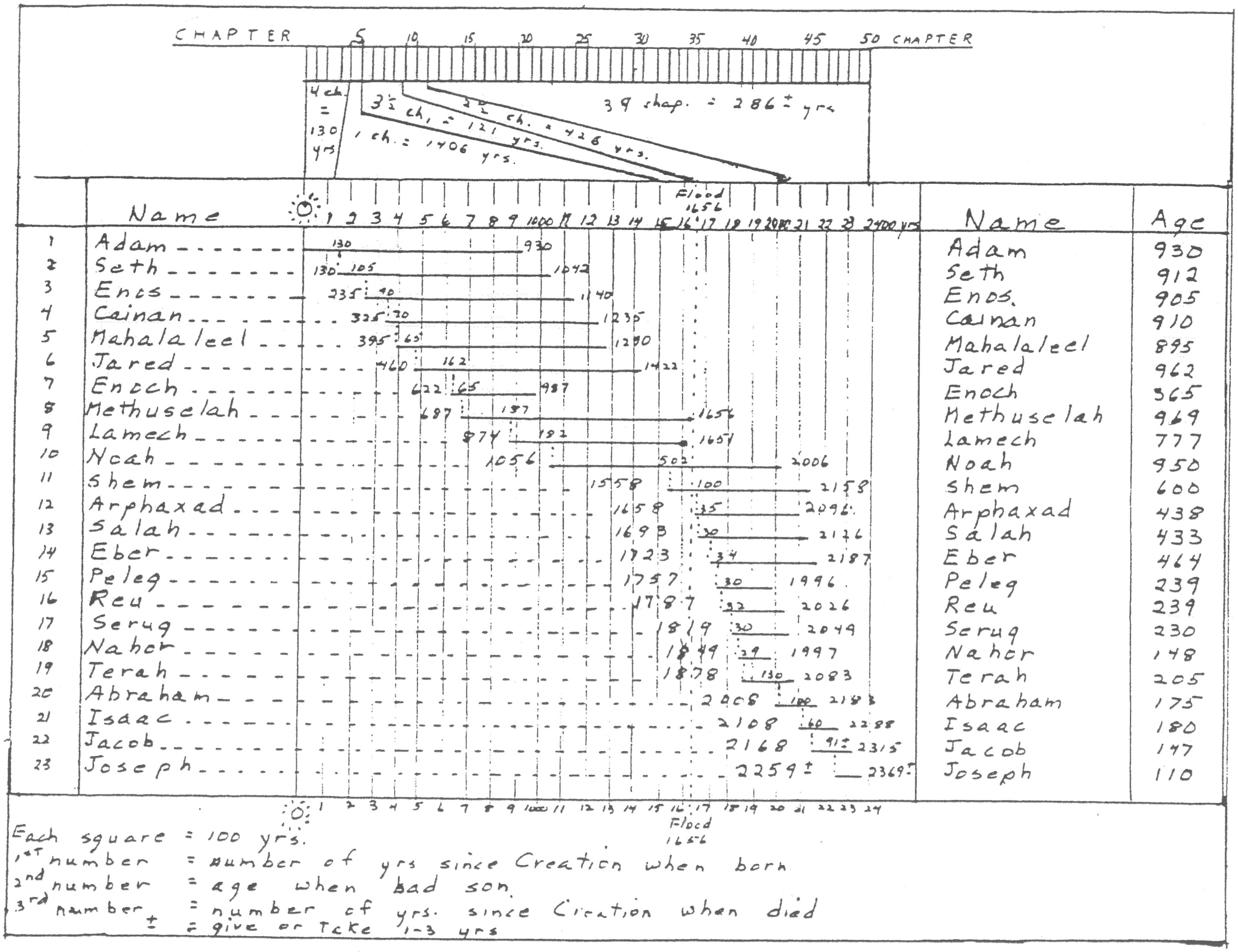
WHO COULD HAVE TALKED WITH WHOM?


List #1
List #2
Adam
Seth
Enos
Cainan
Mahalaleel
Jared
Enoch
Methuselah
Lamech
Noah
Shem
Arphaxad
Salah
Eber
Peleg
Reu
Serug
Nahor
Terah
Abraham
Isaac
Jacob
Joseph & his 11 brothers

So...

Adam	could have talked with	Seth & List #1
Seth	could have talked with	List #1
Most of List #1 . .	could have talked with	Noah
Noah	could have talked with	Shem & List #2
Part of List #1 . . .	could have talked with	Shem
Shem	could have talked with	List #2, Abraham, & Isaac
Most of List #2 . .	could have talked with	Abraham
Part of List #2 . . .	could have talked with	Isaac
Abraham	could have talked with	Isaac & Jacob
Isaac	could have talked with	Jacob & Joseph & his brothers

CHART: TIME LINE OF GENESIS BY GENERATIONS & CHAPTERS



Fitting the Chapters of Genesis to the Time Line

This lesson really isn't necessary unless you want to do it. I enjoyed doing it, but others might not! I might suggest that you may just want to point out to the women the top of the "Time Line of Genesis by Generations and Chapters Chart", the one you used for the overlapping generations. Then just explain that we can see what God felt was important to talk about by how much space in the Bible he gave to things. This lesson will show, though, how you can make an extra little chart to tack onto the top of your "Timeline of Genesis" chart. A copy of this extra chart will be is shown on your "Genesis Timeline" chart at the end of the previous lesson and in "Teacher Helps" at the end of this booklet.

If you don't do this as you go along, this is what you can just point out to the class:

There are 50 chapters in Genesis. God used:

1. 4 chapters to cover the 130 years from Creation to the birth of Seth -- 2 of these 4 chapters cover only the 6 days of Creation!
2. 1 chapter to cover the 1406 years from the birth of Seth to Noah
3. 3½ chapters to cover the 121 years from when He decided to send a flood until after that flood.
4. 2½ chapters to cover 426 years from the end of the Flood until Abraham
5. 39 chapters to cover about 286 years from Abraham until the death of Joseph in Egypt

If you should want to figure all of this out with the class, the lesson is below. Otherwise, just do the pointing out (above) and then skip the rest of this lesson and go on to chapter 6.

=== I know that all of you are pretty much familiar with the whole storyline of the book of Genesis, so we're going to sort of summarize Genesis here since we've just finished showing the overlapping generations from Adam through Joseph. We're going to finish up the Genesis time line by fitting the chapters of Genesis up with the years involved. To me it was quite revealing. It showed me what God thought was important enough to give the most space to.

=== The divisions I've come up with may be somewhat arbitrary. Genesis could have been divided somewhat differently in some places, I'm sure, but we're going to do it my way for the simple reason that this is the way that it's in the booklet of charts I gave you!

*-- Gen. 5:3 What is the very first event in the Bible for which God gave us some numbers so that we can date it as having happened a particular number of years after Creation? ** the birth of Seth

--- How old was Adam when he had Seth? ** 130

--- So, obviously, how long after Creation was that? ** 130 years after Creation

--- And how many chapters are covered up to that point? ** 4 chapters.

--- What does the 4th chapter end with? ** the birth of Seth

=== I realize that several generations of Cain's descendants are also included, but they seem to be just incidental.

PUT IN 1ST LINE FROM CHAPTER 4 TO 130 A.C. (I used different colored felt pens for each of these divisions.)

=== Do you all understand what I'm doing? Any questions?

=== So we go through 4 chapters of the Bible before we get to the first "date", which is 130 A.C. (After Creation). Let's look at what happened in those 4 chapters.

--- What takes up the entire first 2 chapters of Genesis? ** the 6 days of Creation

=== Creation is told very concisely in the 1st chapter and then retold with some detail in the 2nd chapter

=== So God spent 2 whole chapters on the events of only 6 days!

PUT IN SMALLER LINE FROM CHAPTER 2 DOWN TO "CREATION"

--- What is the 3rd chapter about? ** the Fall and the Expulsion from the Garden of Eden

--- What is the first half of the 4th chapter about? ** when Cain killed Abel and was banished by God

--- The second half of the 4th chapter covers 5 generations of whose descendants? ** Cain's

=== These few verses have to cover centuries, though I'm don't think it takes Cain's descendants up to the Flood. But it seems almost like a parenthetical phrase to me. And we aren't given a date, so I'm just throwing this ½ chapter into the 130 years, even though it would have taken much longer. I think that's actually fair, don't you? This chapter-year thing is just to give us an idea of what is where.

--- So the 5th chapter starts with what date? ** 130 A.C.

--- And what does the 5th chapter end with? ** when Noah is 500 years old and has his sons

--- Looking at our Genesis Time Line, to how many years after Creation does that take us? ** 1556 A.C.

--- So how many years does this 5th chapter cover? ** 1426 (1556 - 130 = 1426)

=== However, because of something in the 6th chapter, I'm going to arbitrarily put the line at 1536 A.C. It could well have been 1556, but you'll see why I'm putting 1536 in a minute.

PUT IN 2ND LINE FROM CHAPTER 5 TO 1536 A.C.

=== So 1406 years are covered in 1 chapter! Evidently God thought it was important to list the ages of these men and how old they were when they had their sons, but not important to give any details of events except for one thing.

--- About whom were those details given (5:22-24)? ** Enoch

--- Why might God have considered all of these ages important? ** because, as we saw, we can use them to figure out how long between Creation and the Flood and eventually to figure out how long Man had been on the earth

--- What is the 6th chapter going to be about? ** God decides to destroy the world but saves Noah and tells Noah to build the ark. It goes up until God tells Noah to take the animals and food into the ark.

=== So actually, the 6th chapter is about the cause for and the preparation for the Flood, isn't it?

*-- Gen. 6:3 At the beginning of this 6th chapter, how long is it going to be until the Flood? ** 120 years

*-- Gen. 7:6 And how old is Noah going to be when the Flood actually comes? ** 600 years old

--- So how long before the Flood does the 6th chapter apparently begin? ** 120 years

--- But how old would Noah have been at the beginning of the 6th chapter? ** 600 - 120 = 480

=== And those 20 years is why I put this line back here at 1536 instead of 1556. It could have been either date, but I just sort of liked ending this second bunch of years at the point when God decided to destroy Man instead of when Noah was 500. There is the difference of 20 years. But this is entirely arbitrary.

=== Now, I want to take this 3rd chapter-year group up to the end of the Flood, so we are going to have to find out how long the Flood lasted and add that to the 120 years, aren't we? So keep the 120 years figure in the back of your mind.

--- Flip through and find out where in the Bible the actual Flood was completely over, Noah is back out of the ark, and God has promised there will never be another world-wide flood. It is in the middle of a chapter, I'm afraid; where is it? ** Genesis 9:17

=== So our next line from chapter to year will start here in the middle of the 9th chapter. Let's keep that in mind while we find out how long the Flood lasted.

--- How many chapters tell about the preparation for the Flood and the actual Flood? ** 3½ chapters

*-- Gen. 7:11 Exactly how old was Noah when the Flood started? ** 600 years, 1 month, 17 days

--- Gen. 8:13-14 How old was Noah when the Flood was finally dried up and God told him to leave the ark? ** 601 years, 1 month, 27 days

--- So how long was Noah in the ark after it started raining? ** 1 year 10 days

=== That wasn't hard, was it?! By the way, does that sound like a local flood, as some people try to say?!

--- So let's add this year of the Flood onto the 120 years that we had earlier when God said He was going to destroy all flesh, and how many years do we have between the end of chapter 6 and the middle of chapter 9? ** 121 years

=== So we have 121 years covered in 3½ chapters. Actually, 2½ of those chapters cover only the 1 year of the Flood!

PUT LINE FROM HALF WAY THROUGH CHAPTER 9 TO 1657. Then put a smaller line for the one year of the Flood itself for "chapters 7 to 9½ = 1 year".

=== Is everyone with me? Any questions?

=== The next division we're going to make will end at the call of Abraham after his father dies and God has him go to the Land of Canaan.

--- Flip through the next chapters; where do we find that call of Abraham? It's at the beginning of a chapter. ** chapter 12

--- How many chapters are in this space between the Flood (ending in chapter 9½) and his call? ** 2½ chapters

--- Gen. 12:4 How old had we said that Abraham was when he started for Canaan? ** 75 years old

--- So where will we start the line that shows this? 2008 + 75 = 2083

--- And how many years does that have between the Flood and what is usually called "The Call of Abraham"? ** 426 years

=== So that has 2½ chapters for 426 years.

PUT LINE FROM CHAPTER 11 TO 2083

=== Quickly let's see what happened in those 426 years.

--- What happens in the last half of chapter 9? ** Noah curses Ham's son because of Ham's disrespect

=== Chapter 10 just tells about the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth and where they settled. This is where we hear the name of "Nimrod", a mighty hunter who is a descendant of Ham.

--- There is only one event mentioned in this 10th chapter, and it is only touched on, leaving us to wonder!

*-- Gen. 10:25 What does the Bible itself say happened? ** the earth divided

=== Some people say that is when the Tower of Babel was; that the peoples of the earth divided because of the confusion of the languages. Others say that is when the continents "drifted" apart. I say that I don't know, but I'd certainly love to know for sure! But evidently it was common knowledge at the time, whatever it was. But it would be like in 2000 years from now saying 9/11 or December 7th. People wouldn't know what we were talking about. But we all know now.

=== In Chapter 11 we have the genealogies from Shem to Abraham in the last half, but the first half of chapter 11 has a very important event recorded.

--- What is it? ** the Tower of Babel and the confusion of languages

--- All right, we are up to the 12th chapter; how many chapters are in the book of Genesis? ** 50

--- And how many years, give or take a few, did we say Genesis covers? ** 2369 years

=== Our A.C. numbers help here!

=== For the sake of being able to remember more easily, I like to say Genesis covers 2400 years, but we're going to use 2369 at this point.

--- And how many years have we covered up to this point where chapter 12 starts? ** about 2083 years

--- Now, using the real figure of 2369+/-, how many years does this last division cover, up to the end of the book of Genesis? ** 286+/- (2369 - 2083 = 286)

--- And how many chapters are used in covering those 286 years? ** 39 chapters!!

PUT IN 39 CHAPTERS FOR 286+/- YEARS

=== God must consider the events of those 286 years to be very important to use so many chapters for them.

--- Just glancing at the rest of Genesis, whose lives does it mainlly cover? ** Abraham's, Isaac's, Jacob's, and Joseph's

*-- Ex. 3:6 By what title does God refer to Himself throughout the Bible? ** as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

--- Why are these 3 men so important? ** they are the beginning of the Jewish race through whom God chose to reveal Himself to the world and through whom the Saviour would come

=== Now, it's not really at all important for us to remember which chapter has which events. But I think it is an eye-opener to see how many or how few chapters God devotes to various people and events.

=== Of course, the lives of these various men overlap, since they are fathers and sons. But if we were to divide this down even more, we could say:

Draw little lines here within the 286 years/39 chapters to sort of separate these names.

Chapters 12-24	(13 ch.)	Life of Abraham	(2083-2148--Isaac married)
Chapters 25-27	(3 ch.)	Life of Isaac	(2148-2240--Jacob leaves)
Chapters 28-36	(9 ch.)	Life of Jacob	(2240-2280--boy Joseph dreams) (Ch. 36 = Esau's descendants)
Chapters 37-50	(14 ch.)	Life of Joseph	(2280-2369--Joseph dies)

--- Why might the life of Joseph have been so important? ** it shows how God got the Children of Israel down into Egypt

=== And that brings us down into secular Egyptian history. We don't know exactly where, but a give or take of 100 years or so wouldn't make much difference. We can see that mankind hadn't gone on for millions of years or even tens of thousands of years!

REVIEW:

-- In which group of chapters would we find the story of the Tower of Babel? ** in chapters 10-12

-- Cain killing Abel? ** chapter 1-4

-- Enoch? ** chapter 5

-- Abraham almost sacrificing Isaac? ** somewhere after chapter 12
-- The dying Jacob's prophecies about his sons? ** near the end of Genesis

APPLICATIONS:

** We should really know the book of Genesis, as it is the basis for the entire Bible.
** God considered Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as very important, so we should know about them.
** God doesn't seem to measure importance in length of time, but in what happens.
** It is important to pass your faith on to your family.

Chapters 6 - 9: Noah and the Flood

(This will take at least 2 lessons. I've sort of divided it into chapters, but just go until you want to stop or find a convenient stopping place.)

Chapter 6: Preparation for the Flood

=== We've been doing some overviews of Genesis, so let's just have a few review questions to get us back to the chapters of Genesis.

Here I referred back to the chart we had made in the previous lessons.

-- How many generations between Adam and Noah? ** 10

-- How many years between Creation and the birth of Noah? ** about 1150 years

-- How many years between Creation and the Flood? ** 1656

-- How many chapters does the Bible give for the first 6 days? ** 2 chapters

-- How many chapters for the next 130 years? ** 2

-- How many chapters for the next about 1400 years? ** 1!

-- How many chapters of Genesis for the next 121 years? ** 3½

=== And actually, 2 of those chapters take place during the 1 year of the Flood.

-- How many chapters for the next about 400 years, the time between the Flood and Abraham? ** 2½

-- And how many chapters does Genesis then give for the lives of only 4 men? ** 39!

-- Who are these 4 men? ** Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph

-- About how many years are covered in these 39 chapters? ** about 285 years

-- Why are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob so important? ** because they are the start of the Jewish nation through which God chose to reveal Himself to the world and through which the Messiah was to come

=== Remember, God calls Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These are very important men.

=== All right, now, before we actually get to the Flood, let's get a few interesting details about a couple of Noah's ancestors that we may have skipped. If we already mentioned them, though, the review won't hurt us!

*-- Gen. 5:21-24 What man in this list are we told an interesting event about? ** Enoch

--- What was that interesting event? ** he didn't die but was carried off to Heaven alive

*-- Jude 14-15 What else do we know about Enoch? ** he was a prophet

--- About what did Enoch prophesy? ** the (second) coming of Christ with believers and His judgment

--- What might we imply from the words "with ten thousands of His saints"? ** that they knew at the time of Enoch about our being resurrected

=== So hundreds of years before the Flood people knew about the coming of God to judge the earth, and, it would seem that they also knew about the resurrection!

*-- Gen. 5:21 Who was Enoch's son? ** Methuselah

=== Enoch was a prophet, and he named his son a name that translated seems to mean "after me the sending forth of waters" or "the deluge".

--- About what was Enoch prophesying with the name of his son? ** the Flood

--- And when did Methuselah die, according to our chart? ** the year of the Flood

=== So after Methuselah died, the waters were sent forth; the deluge came.

*-- Gen. 5:28-29 Who was the son of Methuselah? ** Lamech

--- And who was Lamech's son? ** Noah

--- Do you have a footnote that says what "Noah" means? ** "comfort" or "rest"

--- Why did Lamech name his son Noah "Comfort"? ** ** because his son would bring comfort or rest to mankind in their hard work in the cursed ground

--- When was the ground cursed? ** at the Fall

=== So, even though we still have thorns and thistles and bad bugs in our gardens, it isn't nearly so bad as it was before the Flood.

--- So who else besides Enoch seems might have been a prophet? ** Lamech

=== We aren't told, though, whether Lamech knew how this comfort from the cursed ground would happen.

=== So, well before the Flood there were prophets of the Lord around. And they knew about what we call the Second Coming (the conquering Messiah), and evidently about the Resurrection of the dead. We don't know how much they knew about what we call the First Coming (the suffering Messiah). But they obviously knew enough to be saved. We also know from the end of chapter 4 that they had a complex society with musicians, miners, smelters, metal workers, carpenters, ranchers and farmers as well as at least one bigamist, at least one murderer, and liars. So now let's start Gen. 6.

*-- Gen. 6:1-4 From v. 3, how does it seem that mankind was doing? ** very poorly

--- In v. 3, how long does God say that He will give man? ** 120 years

=== We're not going to go into what it means by "sons of God" and "daughters of men". I'm just going to mention that there are 2 main ideas of what this means: (1) One idea is that Seth's godly line (sons of God) intermarried with Cain's ungodly line (daughters of men), and (2) the other idea is that the fallen angels had children by humans. We could sit and speculate on this all morning and still not know if we had gotten the truth, and I don't really think this would be profitable, so let's just recognize that the situation was very bad, so bad that God was ready to wipe out mankind. (Personally, I think it means godly men marrying ungodly women, but I'm not going to argue about it!)

--- What kind of children were produced (v. 4)? ** "giants", strong men, "fellers" (those who knock things down, or like lumberjacks who fell trees), men with reputations, well known men

=== "Giant" doesn't necessarily mean a very tall person. It can mean "a giant among men" as Cortez was -- and he was only about 5' 2" tall, a short man amongst Spaniards but still a "giant!" And the short Napoleon was a "giant".

*-- Gen. 6:5-7 In v. 5, what does it say about even the very thoughts of man? ** they were always evil

--- Was it only just people that were now a grief to God? ** evidently not, because He says He'll even wipe out all of the animals and birds and "creeping things"

=== He's going to start all over again!

*-- Gen. 6:8 Do there seem to have been any righteous people at all? ** yes

--- Who? ** Noah

--- What did God think of Noah? ** God regarded Noah favorably

=== Now, here it seems to me that the writer stops, then goes back and sort of summarizes in the next few verses what he had just written. Sort of like the retelling of Creation in Gen. 2. Or it could be that in verses 3 to 8 we have a strictly heavenly view of things; God sees it and this is what He thinks about it. But now it's going to go on to an earthly view.

*-- Gen. 6:9-10 What do we know about Noah from v. 9? ** he was just, blameless, upright, and he walked with God

--- Who else did we hear about today who "walked with God"? ** Enoch

--- What relation was Enoch to Noah? ** his great-grandfather

--- Who are Noah's sons? ** Shem, Ham, and Japheth

*-- Gen. 6:11-12 What 2 descriptions of the earth and its inhabitants do we have in these verses? ** it was corrupt and filled with violence

--- According to v. 12, were just a few things corrupted? ** no, "all flesh"

*-- Gen. 6:13 Did God tell anyone about what He planned on doing? ** yes

--- Whom did God tell? ** Noah

--- What was God planning on doing? ** destroying all flesh along with the world

*-- Gen. 6:14-16 Noah had found favor in God's sight; did God seem to be planning to destroy Noah along with "all flesh"? ** no

--- How do we know this? ** because God told Noah how to build a boat to be saved in

--- What is this boat called? ** an ark

--- What was to be the size of this ark? ** 450' long, 75' wide, 45' high

=== I think that's about the size of a very small modern battleship! My son says there was at least one battleship built that had the proportions of the ark!

=== There is a footnote in one of my Bibles that says that in 1609 a man from Holland built a boat with these proportions, though smaller than the ark, and proved that it could float well. It also showed that it could carry more than 1/3rd more cargo that any other shape with the same cubic feet. According to the footnote, this revolutionized ship building, and by 1900 all of the large ships were fairly much in the same proportion as the ark. Later, though, the ships were built longer so they could go faster.

--- Would Noah have been concerned with speed? ** no; he just wanted to float!

I've put a sketchy diagram of what the ark probably looked like at the end of this lesson and in Teacher Helps at the end of this booklet.

=== The Hebrew language has a word for boat or ships, but that word wasn't used here. This word "ark" here means simply "box" or "chest". The ark sounds to me like a great, big box, not some streamlined vessel with a curved hull and curved bow and stern such as we might have or we see in drawings. It sounds more like an enormous shoe-box shaped thing. Though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it. But I don't see why it would have to be other than just that, a big rectangular box. I asked both my ex-Merchant-Marine-husband and my 30-year-Navy-man brother whether a big rectangular box could just float in one spot as well as a pointy-ended, curved-hulled construction, and they both thought it could. This Hebrew word is only used of 2 objects in the Bible: (1) Noah's ark and (2) the ark that baby Moses was in. So this word seems to mean just a box to float something in. The Ark of the Covenant is a different Hebrew word for "chest". That word is used for ark 195 times, chest 6 times, and coffin (Joseph's) 1 time. Interestingly, though, in the New Testament the same Greek word is used for both Noah's ark and the Ark of the Covenant. No where in the Bible does it seem to use the word "boat" or "ship" for Noah's ark, just "box" or "chest". But again, I wouldn't be dogmatic about this shape, and I don't think it's anything to argue about.

--- Why do you suppose that perhaps God didn't have the ark be a regular boat shape? ** it was to be strictly for survival, not to travel somewhere, so it didn't need to be pointed or curved for cutting through the water at good speeds; it just needed to float

=== Again, we shouldn't be dogmatic about this, but it is an interesting thought as we picture things. I've seen aerial photos of some sort of structure that's poking out of a mountain that some people think might be Noah's ark, and as I recall, it is square on the end and seems to be flat on the bottom. But let's stop speculating and go on!

--- What details are we given of the ark other than the size? ** it was to have 3 levels (decks), rooms in it, be waterproofed inside and out with tar, have an 18 inch window in it, and have a door in the side

=== An interesting thing about the rooms in the ark: This particular Hebrew word is used 13 times in the Bible. Only in this passage in Genesis is it translated "rooms". In the other 12 places it is translated "nests". I don't draw any conclusions from this; I just think it is thought provoking.

--- Let's skip over a ways and find out a detail about this window.

*-- Gen. 8:6 What do we learn here about the window? ** the window can be opened and closed

=== I really don't know just what the window in the ark was. Some people think it was just one 18 inch window up near the roof of the ark; others think it was one 18 inch window in the roof, and here in the 8th chapter of Genesis we saw that it speaks of Noah's opening the window to put the raven out. So it doesn't sound like just a hole cut in the side; it sounds as if some way it could opened and closed, perhaps with a shutter. Other people, though, think it was an 18 inch tall opening all the way around the ark (between the studs, of course) up under the roof that was used for ventilation and light. But we can't know for sure. It certainly could have gotten stuffy, it would seem to me! But this is all of the details about the window that we're given, it's 18 inches and can be opened and closed.

=== Since we're talking about how the ark looked, let's take one more verse here about its construction before we go back to chapter 6.

*-- Gen. 8:13 What do we find out about the ark here? ** it had a removable "covering"

=== I have no idea what this is talking about! But now let's go back to chapter 6.

*-- Gen. 6:17-20 What does God tell Noah that He is going to do? ** bring a flood on the earth

--- What will this flood do? ** destroy everything with breath

--- Does that seem to include animals as well as the wicked people? ** yes, "everything in which there is breath".

--- Will there be any life left at all to repopulate the world? ** yes; 8 people and a pair (according to this verse) of all of the animals and birds and creeping things (male and female)

--- Who were these 8 people? ** Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, and the wives of each

--- If there were still dinosaurs at this time, from these verses can we figure if there would have been dinosaurs on the ark? ** yes, of "every living thing of all flesh"

--- From the end of v. 20, how would you say that Noah was able to gather all of these kinds of animals without missing any? ** it seems that God had the creatures come to Noah on their own

=== Some people say that there were dinosaur eggs rather than the actual dinosaurs, but an egg couldn't come rolling up by itself. And we aren't told that Noah was ordered to go gather dinosaur eggs. But I'm not going to speculate on that. Of course, they could have been very young, small dinosaurs. But let's go on to what we can know for sure.

=== Let's look at a detail in the next chapter that has to do with the animals.

*-- Gen. 7:2-3 What detail are we given here about the animals and birds that will go with Noah on the ark that wasn't given in the previous verse? ** that God designated some animals (and evidently birds, also) as clean and some as not clean

=== Some people seem to think that the designation of clean and unclean indicates that people ate meat before the Flood. I don't know. Of course, this was written down by Moses who was given dietary rules. And, again, of course, God would know what He would consider under the law of Moses as clean and unclean whether Noah did or not, and God had the birds and animals go to Noah. So Noah didn't specifically need to know what was clean or unclean, did he?

--- What about the clean animals and birds? ** Noah was to take 7 of them

=== We'll go into that a little more at a later lesson.

*-- Gen. 6:21-22 What about food while they're all on the ark? ** Noah is to gather and store it

--- How well did Noah follow God's directions? ** he did everything that God told him to

=== Now, from looking ahead, we know they're going to be in that ark for just over a year. We might well wonder how Noah could gather enough food to feed his family and all of those animals for that length of time. My answer is, I don't know! However, some people have conjectured that the animals may have hibernated, and maybe even the people may have sort of hibernated part of the time. But I think the best answer is mine, that we just don't know the details here.

=== But let's think a minute about something else.

--- What is Noah going to be doing for quite a few years according to v. 14? ** building a great, big boat

--- And how long did we say that God was giving mankind, v. 3? ** 120 years

--- So, though we aren't specifically told this, how long might Noah have been building this boat? ** maybe 120 years

--- Why is that the longest time that it would have taken? ** because back in v. 3, God says it would be 120 years for man

=== Of course, it could have been less time that Noah was building, but it would have taken some years no matter when within the 120 years Noah was told by God to start building it.

--- By the way, how many years did we say that the Flood was after Creation? ** 1656

--- So approximately where are we as far as the years after Creation when Noah is building it, just a shotgun number? ** about 1600 year

--- Now how long have we decided that it has been from Creation until now? ** about 6,000 years

--- So approximately what percentage of man's history is involved between Creation and the Flood? ** almost a quarter!

=== And that's covered in just a handful of chapters!

--- How many years did we say that the book of Genesis covers? ** about 2400 years

--- And how many chapters are in Genesis? ** 50

=== So 2/3rds of the years of Genesis are covered by only about 1/8th of the chapters! Anyway, back to our lesson here. The animals are streaming onto the ark.

--- Would people have been aware of this activity? ** yes; they couldn't very well not see it, considering its size!

=== Knowing where the Garden of Eden was located, the ark was probably built over in Mesopotamia somewhere, perhaps in the middle of a desert. But we aren't told that. At any rate, this huge construction would have been very noticeable, no matter where it was built.

--- Do you think that Noah will tell them why he's building it? ** I would think so

--- By the way, would people probably have known about boats at that time? ** yes

--- What makes you think that? ** there were big rivers right there, and I can't imagine people not using small boats to travel on them

=== Again, I wouldn't be dogmatic about this, though. But let's look at something else about Noah.

*-- II Pet. 2:5 What does this say about Noah? ** that he was a preacher of righteousness

=== So it sounds as if Noah preached about repentance to the people during all of those years of construction. Perhaps he'd even preached to them before this time; we don't know.

=== By the way, I just had another new thought (for me!). We usually think of Noah's pounding away on the ark by himself or with the help of his sons as they got old enough. But I can't see any reason why Noah might not have hired men to work for him. I'm not saying he did hire men, but it's a thought. An if he did have other men working for him, you can be sure that he told them just why he was building the ark! Again, we don't know, but it's an interesting thought.

--- At any rate, would you say that humanity had a chance for repentance? ** yes
--- Now, eventually the Lord will return and judge the earth; do people still have a chance for repentance now? ** yes
--- How do they have this chance now? ** through the Bible and preaching

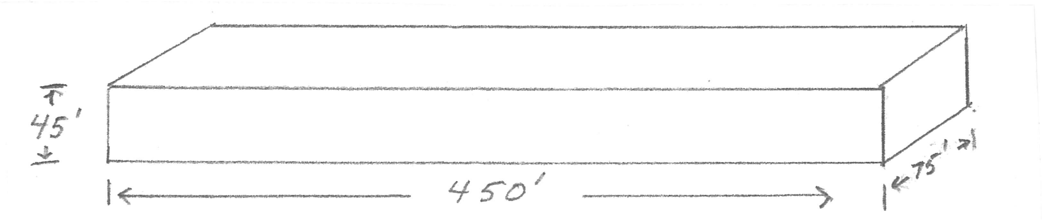
REVIEW:

-- What was the condition of mankind about 1550 years after Creation? ** very wicked
-- So what did God decide to do about it? ** wipe out the entire human and animal population of the world
-- How long before the Flood itself did God decide to do this? ** 120 years
-- Wipe out absolutely everyone? ** no, except for Noah and his family and selected animals
-- How did God decide to save the selected few? ** in a great big boat
-- How did the boat get there? ** God had Noah build it
-- How did Noah know how to build it? ** God told him
-- Who all is going to go into the ark? ** Noah and his wife and his sons and their wives
-- What will be in the ark with them? ** a pair of every kind of animal (and we find out in the next chapter, 7 of the clean ones and birds)

APPLICATIONS:

** God doesn't approve of wickedness!
** God is merciful.
** People should repent while they have the opportunity.
** God has His plans.
** We don't know everything about everything in the Bible! God doesn't always give us all of the details we might like to know.
** There will be a judgment.

DIAGRAM OF THE ARK



Plus an 18" window somewhere, somehow
Plus a door
Plus some sort of covering
Also had 3 stories inside of it

Chapter 7: The Flood itself

=== In the last lesson we looked at the reason for the Flood and the preparation for it.

-- What was the reason for the upcoming Flood? ** because everyone was so very wicked

-- What did God decide to do about this wickedness? ** wipe out everyone and everything with the Flood

-- How long before the Flood itself did God decide to do this? ** 120 years

-- Was anyone at all righteous? ** yes, Noah was

-- What did God decide to do about Noah? ** save him

-- How? ** by having him build what sounds like just a great big box, an ark

-- Who would go in this ark? ** Noah, his wife, their 3 sons, and their wives, 8 people

-- Would anything else be in the ark? ** yes, a pair of each kind of land creature and bird

=== By the way, I've been saying that God "decided" something. This is simply a human way of expressing things. We know from other places in the Bible that God had plans for everything from the very beginning. God didn't just suddenly, unexpectedly change His mind and act on a whim.

=== As we continue now, we will include a couple of verses we already read during our lesson on chapter 6, but that won't hurt us any to repeat them!

*-- Gen. 7:1 What does God tell Noah to do? ** come into the ark

--- Why does God tell Noah this? ** because God had seen that Noah was upright, just, righteous

=== This seems to indicate that Noah only was upright at that time, in that "generation".

--- Glance ahead at v. 6; how old was Noah when the Flood actually started? ** 600 years old

--- Back in Gen. 5:32, how old was Noah when he started having his 3 sons? ** 500 years old

--- And from Gen. 6:3, how long had it been from the time that God decided to wipe everyone out until the Flood? ** 120 years

--- So had Noah had his 3 sons at the point where God decided He'd send a flood? ** no

--- But from Gen. 6:18, when God tells Noah to build the ark, who does God say will be saved in the ark? ** Noah, his wife, his 3 sons, and their wives

--- Are we actually told exactly when God told Noah to build the ark and are we told how long it took Noah to build the ark? ** no

=== So Shem, Ham, and Japheth may or may not have been born at the point where God first decides on the Flood or when He first instructs Noah. It don't think this is particularly important, but I'd never thought about it before, so you get to share in my "new thought!"

--- From the wording of the command in v. 1 here in the KJ translation, where might it seem that God may be saying that He Himself is? ** in the ark

=== Of course, we know that God is everywhere. Also, this word which is translated 1435 times as "come" is also translated 123 times as "go", as well as a couple hundred times as "bring", "carry," etc., so we have to be careful here not to read something into the Bible that isn't there.

*-- Gen. 7:2-4 In v. 3, why does God say He is saving the animals as He is? ** so they can reproduce again after the rest of "all flesh" has been wiped out

=== Sort of as "seed corn"!

=== Now we get an extra detail about the animals that are to go into the ark. We looked at it last time, but let's look at again since we're in this chapter.

--- How many animals of each kind, only 1 pair? ** no, 7 of the clean but only 2 of the unclean

--- How about the birds? ** 7 of them

--- God has told Noah to go into the ark; how long will it be from then until it starts raining? **

7 days

--- Does Noah have any idea how long it will rain? ** yes, God calls the shots and tells him there will be 40 days and nights of rain

--- Do we have any indication that Noah knew how long he would be in the ark, though? ** no

=== I don't know just how this worked out. Here it sounds as if they all just went in and waited a week. However, a little later it sounds as if they started getting everything ready to go in and on the 7th day the people and animals all entered and then the rain came that day. So I'm not really sure, but we do know that Noah did things just as God told him to do.

=== By the way, some people say that there had never been rain before this time, so people just didn't believe in rain. However, we aren't told there had never been rain before this time. On the other hand, we aren't told that there had been rain. So we need to be careful not to say the Bible says something when it doesn't or to "read" things into it that it doesn't say.

*-- Gen. 7:5-6 How well did Noah follow directions? ** very well, doing all that God told him to do

--- How old was Noah at this time? ** 600 years old

--- Gen. 7:7-10 So, which people are listed as going into the ark? ** Noah, his wife, his sons, and his daughters-in-law.

--- In v. 9, again, how does it seem that Noah found the animals to take onto the ark with him? ** it sounds to me as if God sent the animals to Noah

--- Could this have all been done in secret? ** no

--- So would people have been able to observe this completed huge ship-box and then see animals streaming up to it and going in? ** yes

=== You can't help but wonder what observers thought about it! Of course, Noah may have been building this quite a ways out from where people lived. I doubt if he were doing it right in the down town area! But still people would have to have been well aware of what was going on.

--- Again, remembering from the last chapter when we read II Pet. 2:5, did Noah evidently tell people why this was all going on? ** it sounds like it to me; at least he was a "preacher of righteousness"

--- Was God accurate when He had told Noah in v. 4 when the rains would come? ** yes

--- And when was that? ** in 7 days

*-- Gen. 7:11-12 Now we find God being exact; exactly how old was Noah when the rain came? ** 600 years, 2 month, 17 days

=== From later, this indeed sounds (at least to me!) as if this is the exact age of Noah at this time, not that he was 600 years old and it was the second month and 17th day of some unnamed year.

=== Now, you might say about these numbers, "Well, so what?" However, later it will tell when they came out of the ark, so we will know then exactly how long they were in the ark. And from that we can see that this was no local flood as some people try to maintain! And we're going to do that figuring as we go along.

CHART (Write "rains came... 2...17" This chart is at the end of this lesson and in Teacher Helps at the end of this booklet.)

--- On this day, what happened besides just some rain? ** it seems that the very heavens opened up and dumped water and then the "fountains of the deep" broke open

=== I'm not sure just what it means by the "fountains of the deep" breaking open, but water was coming from both the top and bottom to fill up the earth and wipe it clean.

--- How long did it rain? ** 40 days and nights

*-- Gen. 7:13-16 This is a lot of repetition of what we had earlier, though it does mention the

names of the sons; what were their names? ** Shem, Ham, and Japheth

--- Look at v. 15; what does it say about how Noah was able to get the proper animals? ** it says that the animals came to Noah

--- Does that sound like normal animal behaviour to you? ** no!

=== So this in itself is a miracle, isn't it?

--- Does it sound as if the animals all scrambled into the ark any old which way? ** no, it sounds to me as if they went into the ark in an orderly manner in proper pairs, male and female of a kind

--- In v. 16, how did Noah get that door closed properly? ** he didn't; God closed it

=== We aren't told why God closed it Himself, but I'd like to do just a little suppositioning here, though we need to be careful not to read things into the Bible that aren't actually there.

--- What might have been some reasons why God Himself closed the door of the ark? ** (1) to make sure it was properly closed, (2) to reassure Noah that God would be with him during this time, (3) to keep Noah from opening it for his neighbors if they came pounding on it as the waters rose, and (4) that way Noah wouldn't have to worry whether he had all the types of animals

=== But we have to be careful, don't we, since we aren't told the reason God closed it Himself. We don't want to read into the Bible things that aren't there.

*-- Gen. 7:17-20 How long did the rains and flooding continue? ** 40 days

--- Did the ark prove to be able to float? ** yes, it rose as the waters rose

--- How high are we told that the waters rose? ** 22½ feet (15 cubits)

--- What about the mountains, v. 19? ** they were covered

--- If the water only rose 22½ feet in total, would that have covered any mountains? ** no

=== So to me that sounds as if the water went 22½ feet higher than the mountains.

--- So does this sound like the "local flood" of the atheist? ** no

--- In v. 19, God tells us just which mountain or mountains had the water covering them; which mountain or mountains were covered? ** all of them that are under the whole heavens

--- Again, does that sound very local?! ** of course not!

=== It sounds to me that God is being very specific, very careful to point out that this is a world-wide flood.

=== Even supposing that one might try to think this was a local flood, if there were a mountain there and the water went 22½ feet higher than the mountains, it couldn't remain very "local" could it?! After all, water doesn't just pile up; it "seeks its own level", doesn't it?

=== Another thing that I hadn't thought of before (I tend just to take God at His word and let it go at that!) is that if just a local flood were going to come, why would God have had Noah built an ark the size of a very small, modern battleship and have animals come to it? Why not just tell Noah to move and have the animals move, too? No one could possibly think that all of the animals in the world could be drowned by a local flood!

=== By the way, all over the entire world there are accounts of a world-wide flood. All sorts of peoples have different stories about this flood. It's amazing how many of them have a man building a big boat and then he and his wife with their 3 sons and daughters-in-law going into the boat with lots of animals and being saved.

*-- Gen. 7:21-24 How effectively did this flood carry out God's wish to wipe out everything that breathed? ** very! Everything that breathed that lived on the land died

--- Only what didn't die? ** the occupants of the ark

--- The wording of the 24th verse is a little uncertain (at least to me!), but to me it seems to indicate how long the waters covered the highest mountains up to a certain time; how long was this? ** 150 days

=== This could mean that it was that long until the water was really going down, but it sounds to me as if this is how long it was before the water started going down. But we aren't going to worry about it too much, as we'll find out later exactly how long the entire flood lasted.

--- Let's translate that into months? ** about 5 months.

--- Again, does that sound like a local flood!? ** no!

REVIEW:

-- How did Noah know when it was time to go into the ark? ** God told him

-- What people went into the ark with him? ** his wife, 3 sons, and their wives

-- What else went into the ark with them? ** animals

-- How many? ** a pair of each kind, but 7 of the clean ones and birds

-- How did the door get safely closed? ** God closed it

-- How long did it rain? ** 40 days and nights

-- How else did water get on the world? ** the fountains of the deep broke open

APPLICATIONS:

** We should be careful to live righteously, as not only may that bring blessing for us, but also for our families.

** We should take the Bible for what it says and not try to explain away its clear message.

** We should listen to what God tells us.

CHART: LENGTH OF THE FLOOD

600th year of Noah's life (Gen. 7:11)

	month	day	
rains came	2	17	(Gen. 7:11)
ark ran aground	7	17	= 5 months from beginning of rains (Gen. 8:4)
mountains tops seen	10	1	= 2½ months more (Gen. 8:5)
ark cover removed	1	1	= 1 year minus 1½ months total so far (Gen. 8:13)

601st year

ground dry	2	27	= 1 year 10 days total (Gen. 8:14)

Chapter 8: The Flood is finally over

=== Last time we had the ark built.

-- Then how did Noah know when to go into the ark? ** God told him

-- How did Noah get the proper animals? ** God sent them

-- How many animals of each kind did God send? ** 2 of the unclean and 7 of the clean and 7 of the birds

-- How did Noah manage to close the door of the ark properly? ** he didn't; God closed it

-- How old was Noah when the rains came (7:11)? ** 600 years, 2 months, 17 days

-- How long did it rain? ** 40 days and nights

-- How well did the ark do its job of floating? ** evidently very well

-- Where was the water at the end of the seventh chapter? ** covering the highest mountains

-- How much above the highest mountain had the water gone at its highest? ** 22½ feet

-- How long does it seem until the waters started going down from these highest mountains were covered (7:24)? ** 150 days, about 5 months

*-- Gen. 8:1-2 Were Noah and all of the occupants of the ark forgotten? ** no, God kept them all in mind

--- How does it seem that God went about having the waters of the flood go down? ** He made a wind blow, which I guess helped evaporate the waters, and He closed the "fountains of the deep" and stopped the rain

--- Just a thought; what would happen to this big "shoe box" out on the waters if there were a strong wind? ** it would be blown along and rock around

=== I can't help but wonder about how the ark itself was doing during all of this time. First there was all of that rain and the fountains of the deep opening up (whatever that means!). Were the waters just calm during that time? We aren't told. But now there is a wind that is going to be strong enough to help dry up the waters. Was it just a steady, gentle, warm wind or what? Again, we aren't told. Was the ark just gently riding on the waters, or was it pitching around. Once again, we aren't given any of these details. But I can't help but wonder about it all! But even as we wonder about things, we have to be careful not to say that the Bible actually says something that it doesn't say.

*-- Gen. 8:3-4 According to the end of v. 3, when does it seem that the waters started going down? ** after 150 days

=== Or that could mean that after 150 days the water was really going down. I think it is a little unclear. We're not going to worry about the specifics here, though, as a little later we will find out definitely how long the entire flood lasted.

--- But again, approximately how many months is that? ** about 5 months

=== It seems to me that this is the same 150 days as mentioned before in 7:24, but I'm not sure about that. But we aren't given a month and day, so we'll just not worry about this too much and go to something definite.

--- In v. 4, when did the ark stop floating around and "run aground"? ** in the 7th month on the 17th day

--- When had the rains started, Gen. 6:11? ** in the 2nd month, 17th day

CHART -- Write "ark ran aground...7...17 = 5 months") This chart is at the end of the previous lesson and in Teacher Helps at the end of this booklet.)

--- Where did the ark run aground? ** on one of the mountains of Ararat

=== Ararat is a range of mountains over in Armenia. Armenia is between Turkey and Iran, it's the land south of the Caucasus Mountains and between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea and just north of Mesopotamia. The Tigris River starts up there. Armenia itself is about 6,000 feet above sea level, but there are some of the mountain peaks that are much higher, 2 peaks being about 14,000 and 10,000 feet higher than the plain below them. I believe that Armenia may be part of Turkey now. But back to Noah's ark.

--- When a boat or ship runs aground, does that necessarily mean that you can see what it had run aground on? ** no

--- Why not? ** the bottom of the boat is under water, and it would run aground on some underwater rock or underwater ground before you could see the rock (or in this case, the mountain)

=== Unless, of course, it ran into the side of a mountain and just stayed there. I don't think this necessarily means that the ark was resting on the very tip top of a mountain. But we aren't given the details in the Bible, so we need to be careful.

*-- Gen. 8:5 What did the flood waters do? ** kept going down

--- When in the "year" could the tops of the mountains be seen? ** in the 10th month, 1st day

--- How long from the time the ark ran aground in the 7th month, 17th day until the tops of the mountains could be seen in the 10th month, 1st day? ** about 2½ months

CHART -- Write "mountain tops seen...10...1 = 2½ months more

--- And how long would Noah have been in the ark at this time (he went in in the 2nd month, 17th day)? ** about 7½ months (2½ + 5 = 7½)

=== This makes me wonder if perhaps Noah could see something out of the window in the ark. Though it could just mean the tops could be seen, though there might be no one to see them.

*-- Gen. 8:6-7 What is this "40 days" that is being spoken of in v. 6? ** it seems to me that this means 40 days after the tops of the mountains could be seen

--- About how long would this have been since the rains first started? ** the above 7½ months + 40 days = about 9 months

=== But we aren't given a precise date here in months and days, so we won't add this to our chart.

--- What did Noah do at the end of this 40 days? ** opened the window and put a raven out

--- What did the raven do? ** just stayed outside and flew around

--- How long? ** until the waters were dried up

=== Of course, it might have come and sat on the roof of the ark, after all, a raven isn't an albatross! But we aren't given the particulars.

--- Why might Noah have put the raven out? ** in hopes that it would bring back some sign of what might be going on outside

=== This would indicate to me that Noah couldn't see well out of the window.

*-- Gen. 8:8-9 When do these verses happen? ** some time after the raven didn't come back

--- Are we told how long afterwards? ** no

--- So what else did Noah send out then? ** a dove

--- Why? ** to see if it would bring him back some sign of the waters' having gone down

--- So do you think that the outside world could be plainly observed from the ark? ** no

--- Why not? ** because Noah doesn't seem to know what is happening outside and is sending out the birds to find out

=== It seems to me that they would probably be able to see the tops of any mountains which might be taller than where the ark was, but the actual ground couldn't be seen.

--- What did the dove do? ** came back to the ark

--- Why? ** because there was still water everywhere, and she couldn't find any place to light, and doves feed off the ground

--- What happened to the dove then? ** Noah reached out and brought her back into the ark

--- Let's speculate a minute on why the birds, the raven and the dove, acted differently under the same circumstances; any ideas? ** ravens don't seem to mind being alone and could fly around and roost on the roof of the ark, but doves are very sociable and shy and probably preferred the safety and company in the ark; also, the ravens are scavengers and might have been able to find something rotten to eat, whereas the doves eat more like seeds

*-- Gen. 8:10-11 How long did Noah wait before trying to find out about the water again? ** 7 days (a week)

--- What did Noah do this time? ** sent out the dove again

--- Did the dove come right back? ** no

--- When did it come back? ** in the evening

=== So it sounds to me as if the dove had a good time for a few hours!

--- And what was different this time when she came back? ** she had an olive leaf in her beak

--- Does it sound like an old, soggy olive leaf? ** no, the NAS says "freshly picked"

--- What did Noah know from this olive leaf? ** that the waters had gone down and plants were growing again

=== By the way, notice that it always uses the feminine form for the dove. Maybe the female would be more likely to want to come back. I don't know, though.

=== I wonder about the plants. You would think that it would have killed the plants to have been under water for months. Did God create them again? Did He miraculously keep them alive under the water all of those months and have them ready to leaf out when the waters were dried up? I really don't know enough about plants to say a lot on this. So often God works through natural means, but it seems to me that it would have been a miracle to have the plants growing as soon as the Flood was over, especially a tree.

=== But this olive leaf would be a relief to Noah, wouldn't it? And that is why we use an olive branch as a sign of peace and often even a dove with an olive branch. This is gotten from this historical story of Noah and the ark. Also, we have the expression of "extending the olive branch". Even on our national seal and money we have the eagle holding an olive branch in one claw as a sign of peace and a bunch of arrows in the other claw as a sign of being willing to fight.

*-- Gen. 8:12 How long did Noah wait this time before trying to find out about the condition of the ground? ** another week

--- And what did Noah do this time? ** sent out the dove again

--- And what did the dove do this time? ** didn't come back

--- Why not? ** there would have been trees and comfortable places for it to roost in and, presumably, seeds to eat

=== You can imagine Noah sitting in this ark with all of his family and all of the animals. The ark has been resting on the ground now for some time. Has God communicated with Noah during this time? Does Noah wonder how long to wait in the ark? Would Noah have been able to open the door to the ark if he'd wanted to? Is he waiting for God to tell him to leave? We aren't told these interesting details, are we? So let's not speculate!

*-- Gen. 8:13-14 What did Noah have to do in order to look out of the ark at the world? ** remove the covering of the ark, whatever that means

--- What did Noah see when he removed the covering of the ark? ** that the surface of the ground was dry, that is, the water had subsided

=== I would presume that it was "dry" but muddy.

--- When was it that Noah took the covering off and looked out? ** in the 601st year, 1st mo., 1st day

--- So how long from the time that the rains first came until the cover was removed? ** a year minus 1½ months

CHART -- write "ark cover removed...1...1 = 1 year minus 1½ months total so far"

--- When was the ground thoroughly dry (v. 14)? ** in the 2nd mo. 27th day

--- How long was this from the time that Noah first looked out? ** presuming a 30 day month, it would have been 57 days, or just under 2 months

--- Now, comparing this "601st year, 2nd month, 27th day" with when the rains first started (7:11) in the 600th year, 2nd month, 17 days, how long was Noah in the ark that we know for sure? ** 1 year and 10 days

CHART -- write "ground dry...2...27 = 1 year 10 days total"

=== And we don't even need to know how long a month was! A year is a year all over the world, even though months may be different!

=== Now a thought that naturally comes to mind is how did Noah store enough food to last him, his family, and all of those animals for a whole year? It is speculated that perhaps the animals hibernated, and even perhaps that the people sort of hibernated part of the time. But anything we say will be only that, speculation! However, I did hear of a report where someone figured out that enough food could have been stored in the ark to last a year. Just an aside, think of the manure and sewage problems!!!! It would have a constant, messy, smelly job! But we're given no details here in the Bible, so let's go on.

=== So now we have the Flood over with. The ground is dry, but Noah and company are still in the ark.

*-- Gen. 8:15-17 Now Who do we see for sure re-enters the picture, v. 15? ** God

--- To whom does God speak? ** Noah

--- What does God tell Noah? ** to leave the ark with his family and all of the animals and other creatures on the ark

--- At the end of v. 17, what does God say that he wants the animals and birds and other creatures to do after they leave the ark? ** have lots of offspring

*-- Gen. 8:18-19 So what happened after God spoke to Noah? ** he and his family and the animals all left the ark

=== Notice the repetition here.

--- What people left the ark? ** Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives

--- So how many people was that? ** 8 people

--- And what else in the animal kingdom left the ark? ** birds, animals, creeping things

*-- Gen 8:20 What is the first thing that we know of that Noah did after leaving the ark? ** he built an altar and sacrificed to God

--- What did Noah sacrifice? ** of every clean animal and bird

--- How many of the clean animals and birds had Noah taken with him onto the ark? ** 7

=== As we discussed in an earlier lesson, there is some question whether there were 7 pairs or 3 pairs plus 1. I think it was the latter. Gen. 7:2 reads "of every clean beast take by sevens, the male and his female and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female." Of the unclean animals there were only 2 animals, that is, 1 pair, so it seems to me that there were 7 individual clean animals. But I wouldn't be dogmatic about it.

--- If there were 7 individual clean animals and 1 was sacrificed, what would that leave? ** 3 pairs

--- What type of animal do we know from the law of Moses were clean animals? ** things like cattle and sheep and goats

--- So what does that make you think might have been done with the remaining 6 of each type of clean animal? ** there would be one pair for each son to have to start his flocks

=== It seems to me that there were 7 individual animals. But if there were 7 pairs, then I presume that each son would have 2 pairs and that Noah sacrificed a pair of each clean animal and bird. We are only told that he "took of every clean animal and clean fowl" as a sacrifice; we aren't told how many Noah took of each, 1 or 2.

--- What kind of sacrifice did Noah make? ** a burnt offering

=== There were different kinds of offerings. Some offerings you just gave certain portions to God and ate the rest, had a feast. But with a burnt offering, you burnt the whole thing; you saved none of it to eat. It was truly a sacrifice for the person to offer a burnt offering, since the person got nothing out of it for himself. Also, we don't know for sure whether people had eaten meat before this, though I would imagine they had. But we aren't told.

--- Now, we must be careful since we aren't told the answer to this next question! But why do you think Noah made this huge burnt offering? ** it is possible that God had told Noah to do it, but I am inclined to think that Noah did it on his own as a "thank you" to God for having saved them from the flood and having taken care of them that entire year in the ark.

=== But we can't really know for sure, of course, because we aren't told.

*-- Gen. 8:21-22 Of course, God knows everything, but what is the indication that we are given that God knew of the offering (in the first words of v. 21? ** it says that God smelled a sweet smell

=== So it seems to me that God gave to us at least some of the "senses" that He has, smell being one of them. I think that's really kind of Him! We all enjoy smelling our food and flowers, etc. Also, a bad smell can warn us of spoiled food, etc.

--- So does it seem that God accepted Noah's sacrifice? ** yes

--- To whom is God talking in v. 21? ** Himself

--- How do you know that? ** because He said it in His heart

--- What wonderful news about the ground in v. 21? ** that God would no longer curse it on account of man

--- When had the ground been cursed? ** at the Fall as part of Adam's punishment for having eaten the forbidden fruit

--- And do you remember when we had first heard that something would be done about this curse (5:29)? ** when Lamech named his son "Noah" which meant "comfort" or "rest", because he would "comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands because of the ground which the Lord had cursed"

--- So is that prophecy of Lamech's going to come true? ** of course!

=== As I constantly tell the children, whatever God says will happen will happen -- God's prophecies always come true.

--- What does God acknowledge about man's character in v. 21? ** that from the time a person is young, his very thoughts are wicked

--- At the end of v. 21 what else does God say that He won't do besides not cursing the ground again? ** never destroy every living thing again

--- What things, in v. 22, does God tell us will always be here as long as the earth lasts? ** the various seasons and day and night

=== So we finally got Noah and his family through the Flood and off of the ark.

REVIEW:

-- How did the waters of the Flood go down? ** God made them go down, and He seems to have used a wind to help in that

- -- How long after the beginning of the rains until the waters were dried up enough and the ark ran aground? ** 5 months
- -- How much longer did Noah have to wait until the tops of the mountains could be seen? ** 2½ more months
- -- What did Noah first do to try to find out what was going on? ** he sent out a raven
- -- What did the raven do? ** just stayed outside
- -- What did Noah do next? ** sent out a dove
- -- What did the dove do? ** flew around and then came back to the ark to be brought back inside
- -- Why? ** because there wasn't anywhere for her to rest
- -- How many times did Noah send the dove out? ** 3 times
- -- What was different about the second time? ** the dove had an olive leaf in her mouth
- -- What about the third time? ** she didn't come back
- -- How far apart had been these 3 sendings out of the dove? ** each a week apart
- -- What did Noah do after being in the ark just under a year? ** took off the cover of the ark
- -- And how long total from the beginning of the rain until the ground was completely dry? ** 1 year, 10 days
- -- How did they know when to leave the ark? ** God told them
- -- What was the first thing Noah did after leaving the ark (that we know of)? ** built an altar and sacrificed one of each clean animal and bird
- -- And what was God's reaction to this sacrifice? ** it was favorable
- -- And then what did God say to Himself? ** that He wouldn't curse the ground anymore and that He'd never destroy all life again and that seasons would always be as long as the earth remained

APPLICATIONS:

** God doesn't forget us!!
** God is in control of everything, including rain and wind.
** We can believe the Bible account of the world-wide Flood.
** God always keeps His promises.
** God takes care of His own.
** We should trust God.
** We can know that everything won't be destroyed again until Christ returns, so we don't need to worry about "global warming" or another ice age!
** We should be thankful to God when something good happens to us. (Noah sacrificed)

Chapter 9

1-17 God blesses Noah and his sons after the Flood

=== So we have Noah, his family, and all of the animals off of the ark.

-- How long had they all been in the ark? ** 1 year and 10 days

-- What was the first thing that we know that Noah did after leaving the ark? ** built an altar and offered a burnt offering of one of each clean thing

-- And what was God's reaction to this offering? ** He was pleased and said to Himself that He'd not curse the ground anymore, never again destroy every living thing, and that the seasons, etc. would remain as long as the earth remained

=== Then the story goes on. This is apparently right after Noah offered the sacrifice and the Lord was pleased with it. Remember, though the Bible itself is inspired by God, the chapter and verse divisions in the Bible are man-made.

*-- Gen. 9:1 What did God "do to" Noah and Shem, Ham, and Japheth? ** blessed them

--- What did God tell them to do? ** have lots of children and refill the earth with people

*-- Gen. 9:2 What relationship would people and animals have now? ** all of the animals, birds, fish, and everything else that moved on the earth would be afraid of man, and man would have power over them all

--- We really can't know for sure, but does this bring any sort of thought to your mind about what people's relationship to animals might have been before the Flood? ** it almost sounds as if the animals hadn't been afraid of people before the Flood

=== Of course, we know that before the Fall, animals and people had been on very friendly terms. But we don't really know about the time between the Fall and the Flood.

*-- Gen. 9:3 What else does God say about the relationship between man and other moving creatures? ** that man could now eat anything that moved

=== That sounds to me as if it would include not only what we normally think of as "meat" like beef and chicken and fish, but also reptiles and insects if they wanted to.

--- What was the food that God had originally given people to eat when He created them (Gen. 1:29)? ** plants that bore seeds

--- How had God changed that diet at the Fall (3:18)? ** they were given the "greens" as well as things with seeds, so man would now have to compete with animals for the plants of the field

=== We have no way of knowing, but I think it is likely by the time of the Flood that people were already eating animals. But, remember, we aren't told that. At any rate, now they have permission to eat meat, any kind of meat. To me this doesn't sound as if Noah were shocked at the idea of eating animals, but again, the Bible doesn't say that, so I certainly wouldn't be dogmatic about it!

--- Does God at this point make any distinction between clean and unclean animals? ** no

=== This makes me think about the "clean and unclean" animals and birds that went onto the ark. The animals were sent by God to the ark, and God knew what He would consider clean and unclean and just sent 7 of the clean ones; this was just a worry that Noah didn't have to deal with. And as far as we know, the "official" designation of clean and unclean animals won't come for almost 1000 years after the Flood with the law of Moses.

--- But what had Noah just gotten through sacrificing at this point? ** one each of all of the clean animals

--- How could Noah have known which were clean and unclean? ** he didn't have to know -- he just had to take 1 of all of the ones that there were 7 of on the ark!

--- Can Noah and his descendants really feel free to eat animals, or is it just sort of allowed? ** they could feel free to eat them, because God said that He gave them to the people just as He had given them green plants and vegetables

*-- Gen. 9:4 What one prohibition in their diet does God give to Noah? ** that they were not to eat meat that still has the blood in it

--- What does God say that the blood is? ** the life of the creature

--- Meat all has the juices in it; so how could Noah (and other people) have meat without the blood in it? ** by the way it is killed or treated just after killing. The animal shouldn't be killed just by wringing its neck or hitting it over the head. If that is done, the throat should immediately also be slit and the blood drained out, or its head should be chopped off right away and the blood drained out.

--- Is there anything else this prohibition of eating meat with the life (blood) in it should keep people from doing? ** yes, eating blood itself

=== Blood pudding, blood sausage, drinking blood, etc.

=== This may sound disgusting to us, but it is a common practice among many cultures, including, I'm afraid, some of our farm people.

--- To whom is God giving this order about not eating blood? ** Noah and his sons

--- Could it be said that at this point in history that the order was given to all of mankind then alive? ** yes!

=== Now let's skip over 2400 years. This will be about 20 years after Jesus was raised from the dead and then went back to Heaven to act as our High Priest. This will be after the apostle Paul has been going to the Gentiles, and Gentiles are being saved. Some of the believing Jews want the Gentile Christians to start trying to follow the Law of Moses. The apostles and elders in Jerusalem are gathered together and have finally decided what the saved Gentiles should do as far as the law of Moses is concerned.

*-- Acts 15:28-29 How many things are the Gentile Christians told to do from the Law of Moses? ** 4

--- What are they? ** to abstain from (1) foods offered to idols, (2) blood, (3) things strangled, and (4) sexual immorality

=== Notice that 2 of these have to do with eating blood.

--- Was this anywhere else in the New Testament repealed? ** no

=== Now, I don't want to be dogmatic about this, and I don't intend to argue with anyone about it, but I think that we are still under these 4 rules that were given to the Gentile Christians. I know that many will disagree with me, saying these were just for that time since to do these things would be too repulsive to the Jews, etc., but I see no absolute basis for the disagreement. But even before that, I think that all mankind is still under the command given in Genesis to Noah. Again, many will disagree with me, and I don't want to argue about it, but, again, nowhere do I see this command to Noah repealed. But let's go back to Genesis just after the Flood where God is talking to Noah and his sons.

*-- Gen. 9:5-7 What related subject does God now bring up in v. 5 and 6? ** concerning the blood of man, the killing of man

--- Is this just talking about murder by men? ** no, it even includes if an animal kills a man

--- What is to be done to an animal or man that kills a person? ** the animal or person is to be killed

--- In v. 6, what is the reason that God gives for executing any person or animal that kills a person? ** because man was made in the image of God

--- Now, at that time there was no government with a police force and law courts; who was to kill the animal or person who killed someone? ** every person was supposed to see to it that the killer was brought to justice and killed

=== We are told in the New Testament to obey authorities, so we can't today go out and kill a murderer that the courts let loose, but it seems to me that, as Christians, we should do all we can to help change judges or laws that do this.

--- Do we find anywhere in the Bible that God rescinds this order that murderers are to be executed? ** no

--- By the way, does this bring to your minds a murderer that we've studied about in the Bible who was not killed? ** Cain

=== But, of course, that was by God's decree, so that was all right. But it certainly seems to me to have at least helped lead to the Flood!

*-- Gen. 9:8-11 Does it seem to you as if God were appearing in a dream to Noah in these verses? ** no, it seems as if God were actually speaking to Noah and his sons

--- What does God tell Noah that He, God, is going to do? ** make a covenant

--- With whom is God going to make this covenant, v. 10? ** with all mankind and with all of the animals that were on the ark with Noah (birds, wild animals, and domesticated animals)

--- What is this covenant? ** that never again will everything living be wiped out with a flood nor will there ever be another world-wide flood

--- Looking back at 8:21-22, was this suddenly a new thought to God? ** no, He'd already said it to Himself

--- Did God say that there would never be any floods of any size at all again? ** no

*-- Gen. 9:12-13 What gracious thing does God do so that Noah will know that God really means not to wipe out everything again with a flood or have a world-wide flood? ** gives him a sign, the sign of the rainbow

--- Is this sign just for Noah? ** no, it's for everything that lives, man and animal

--- How do we know this isn't just for Noah and his sons but no other person? ** because it says "and with your descendants after you"

--- For how long will this sign be? ** through all generations

--- So when we see a rainbow today, what should we think of? ** we should be reminded of the Lord God and His promise of never again a world wide flood

=== The rainbow is a wonderful way to teach even very small children not only a Bible "story" but of the faithfulness and goodness of God.

*-- Gen. 9:14-17 Who does God say that the rainbow will remind of God's promise? ** God!

=== Of course, we see the rainbow and not only remember that there will never be another such Flood, but we know that God also sees the rainbow. As we look at the rainbow, we are in a sense "thinking God's thoughts" with Him. Also, we remember that God remembers.

--- Again, how long does God say that this covenant is to be? ** everlasting, forever

--- And just what is that covenant? ** that there won't be another flood to wipe out all living things

=== I like the way that God repeats this important promise several times. That way we won't accidentally miss it!

--- But does God really need to be reminded? ** no!

=== But we do!! And I find that a gracious and reassuring way that God said it.

=== Now we come to a break of probably some years, I don't know exactly how many. But let's review what we just had before we go on.

REVIEW:

-- Noah offered the burnt offering and the Lord liked it; then what did God do to Noah and his sons, v. 1? ** blessed them
-- What food did God give them permission to eat? ** everything that moved on the earth, meat of all sort
-- What one prohibition concerning meat? ** they weren't to eat it with the blood in it
-- Why not, v. 4? ** because the life is in the blood
-- Has this every been rescinded? ** no
-- What did God then go on to say about murderers, be they man or beast? ** they were to be killed
-- Why? ** because man was made in the image of God
-- Back in chapter 8, God had already said to Himself that He'd never again send a world-wide flood to wipe out every living thing; who does God now tell this to? ** Noah and his sons
-- And with whom and what did God now make this promise? ** to Noah, his sons, the birds, the domesticated animals, and the wild animals
-- How do we know today that there will never be another world-wide flood? ** the rainbow is a sign of God's promise to us

APPLICATIONS:

** We should remember God and His promise to us about no more world-wide floods whenever we see a rainbow.
** We should use the rainbow as a means of teaching our little children about God.
** It's all right to eat meat.
** We should vote for laws that keep capital punishment.
** We shouldn't eat blood.
** We should remember that God is faithful to His promises.
** Murder is wrong!
** God has better reasons for what He does than we do.

18-29: Noah's prophecies about his 3 sons (some time after the Flood)

=== So we have the Flood completely over, Noah and his family and all of the animals out of the ark, and God has blessed them.

=== Now we come to an event that happened after the Flood.

*-- Gen. 9:18-19 Again, what were the names of the sons of Noah? ** Shem, Ham, & Japheth

--- What does the last part of the 19th verse mean? ** that everyone who lives on earth was descended from these 3.

=== Now, I find the wording here in v. 18 interesting.

--- What does it first say about these 3 sons of Noah? ** that they came out of the ark

--- I see 2 possibilities for this specific wording; what do you come up with? ** (1) that it's just a parenthetical phrase saying that they had been on the ark with Noah, or (2) that perhaps Noah had other sons who had perished in the Flood

=== I certainly wouldn't be dogmatic about that second idea. In fact, I really think it just is a parenthetical phrase. And back in 6:10 it says that Noah "begat 3 sons". So I rather suspect that this was all he had. But the other was just a thought I had as I was preparing this lesson and examining the verse closely.

--- What new person is named in v. 18? ** Canaan, the son of Ham

--- Was Canaan born before the Flood? ** no, because repeatedly it mentions Noah, his wife, his 3 sons & their wives as going on the ark, being on the ark, etc.

=== And if that isn't enough, I Peter 3:20 specifically mentions that 8 souls were saved in the ark!

=== We'll find out later why Canaan is mentioned.

=== We aren't told how many years after the Flood this upcoming event happened, but I think it might have been quite a few years later, since Ham's son is mentioned here. The time of the event here isn't the important thing, though. The event and the results of it are important.

*-- Gen. 9:20 What kind of work do we find Noah doing here? ** he began farming, part of which was planting a vineyard

=== It almost sounds to me as if perhaps Noah had not previously been a farmer. But, again, we aren't told.

--- But whether or not he had been, why would he start in farming now? ** so they can eat something besides the few animals that came off of the ark!!

*-- Gen. 9:21 What did Noah get from this vineyard? ** wine

=== There are theories that food didn't ferment before the Flood, therefore that Noah didn't know about wine. But we don't have any Bible to base that on. So let's just leave it to the facts we have, that they made wine.

--- And then what did Noah do with this wine? ** got drunk

=== Again, people try to excuse this by saying they didn't have fermentation before the Flood, so Noah didn't know about getting drunk. But again, we have nothing to base this on. So let's just leave it that Noah got drunk and not look for reasons to excuse this. As they said on "Dragnet", "Just the facts, ma'am!" The fact is that he's drunk for some reason or another.

--- What kind of action did this drunkenness lead to? ** lying naked in his tent

=== Perhaps it was a hot day and he was trying to cool down in his drunken state. But, again, we aren't told. The facts are that Noah is drunk and lying naked in his tent. We'll find out in just a minute that he's asleep.

*-- Gen. 9:22-23 According to the verses, who first noticed Noah's condition? ** Ham

--- Did Ham keep his father's indiscretion to himself? ** no, he told his two brothers.

--- What was the reaction of Shem and Japheth? ** they knew their father's behavior was unseemly, so they protected Noah's dignity by covering him

--- What special care did the 2 brothers of Ham take as they covered their father? ** they walked backwards with the covering on their shoulders behind them so as not to see the nakedness of their father

--- What type of attitude does that seem to show that Shem and Japheth had? ** an attitude of respect for their father

--- So far have we been told anything at all about Ham's attitude in this affair? ** not so far that I can see

*-- Gen. 9:24 So here we see what Noah had been doing as he lay naked in his tent; what was it? ** sleeping

--- What does it say that Noah knew when he woke up? ** what Ham had done

--- Does it say exactly what Ham had done? ** no

--- What position does it say Ham has in the order of the sons? ** he's at least not the oldest son; he is "younger" or "youngest"

*-- Gen. 9:25 What is Noah's reaction to whatever it was that Ham had done? ** very negative

--- So what does Noah do to Ham? ** he curses Ham's son

--- So what might we presume that Ham had done to Noah? ** at the very least, he had been disrespectful to his father, and perhaps he'd even mocked him

=== But we aren't given the details, are we? So we need to be careful.

--- Now, if Ham did something that Noah didn't like, why didn't Noah curse Ham instead of Ham's son? ** because God had blessed Ham at the same time that He had blessed Noah and Shem and Japheth back when they came off of the ark

=== So if God blesses someone, it looks like we should be careful not to curse that person at a later time. Perhaps a curse in that case wouldn't even have effect. After all, we can't cancel out God's blessings. Now, let's just take a little aside here.

--- From later in Genesis, who are some men that God blessed? ** Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

--- And what did God at that time say about anyone who blessed or cursed them? ** that He would bless those that blessed them or curse those who cursed them

=== Many people take that to mean that this includes their descendants.

--- And who are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? ** the Jews

=== So it seems to me that we should be very careful in our treatment of the Jews in general. But that is really another subject, so let's go on with Noah here.

--- What is the curse that Noah puts on Canaan, Ham's son? ** that Canaan would be a servant of servants to his relatives

=== That sounds like the lowest of positions, doesn't it? A servant of the servants.

--- Is the curse put on all of Ham's descendants? ** no, just those through Canaan

--- Again, why aren't all of Ham's descendants cursed? ** because God had blessed Ham right after the Flood, and to curse all of Ham's descendants would be like cursing Ham himself

--- If Ham did something wrong, though, what is the sense of Noah's cursing Canaan? ** if something bad happens to your children, then something bad has happened to you, especially if your child is punished because of something you did yourself

--- What might we call a person who is able to give a future curse to someone? ** a prophet

--- So how might Noah have known what Ham had done? ** if he were a prophet (which he was), he might well have known just because he was a prophet

=== But we aren't told just how Noah knew this, are we? So we need to be careful.

=== Now, just an interesting thought, though I don't base anything on it.

--- In what position among the 3 sons does Ham seem to be, v. 24? ** the youngest

=== It seems that perhaps Ham is Noah's youngest son, and then from the next chapter where it lists the sons of the 3 sons of Noah, Canaan is listed last among Ham's sons. So it is thought by many that Canaan was the youngest son of Ham. So it seems (though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it) that perhaps since Noah's youngest son Ham had been the one to be disrespectful, then Ham's youngest son is the one that Noah curses. Of course, the list of Ham's sons with Canaan last might have been that Canaan was one of the older sons but was considered less important than the others. So, again, we need to be careful to realize what is speculation and what is Biblical fact. We must never read into the Bible something that isn't there. All we know for sure is that Ham is not the oldest son of Noah and that one of Ham's sons is cursed by Noah.

=== So we have Noah cursing Ham's son Canaan. Let's go on.

*-- Gen. 9:26 From this verse might we have further reason for thinking that Noah might have been a prophet? ** yes, in that he goes on to give a blessing to his other son Shem

=== And we'll see in the next verse that he will also bless the last son Japheth.

--- Do you think these blessings will carry on to the descendants of these sons? ** it would seem so to me

--- What blessing does Noah give to Shem? ** Noah blesses the God of Shem

--- Who are the main descendants of Shem that we know of? ** the Arabs and the Jews

--- Which of these groups will have a God who is blessed? ** the Jews

--- Which group of the descendants of Shem will we be particularly interested in? ** the Jews

--- In that we know what happened later to the descendants of Shem, what can we figure out from this; how is this a blessing? ** it is saying that Shem will be a worshipper of the true God; otherwise, how would Shem's God be blessed?

--- So could we say that the Arabs fall under this blessing of Shem? ** I wouldn't

=== We know from the Bible that what we'd call "Arabs" were idolaters. But I don't think that's the point here. The point is that God is going to reveal Himself through the Jews. Remember, the whole Bible is a history of the Jews because it is through the Bible, a Jewish history, that we know details about God and about the means our salvation.

--- And what nationality was Jesus? ** a Jew!

=== But back to Noah's blessing to Shem.

--- What will be the position of Ham's son Canaan in relation to Shem? ** Canaan will be the servant of Shem

=== So, so far Noah has cursed Ham's son Canaan, but said nothing more about the rest of Ham's descendants, and Noah has blessed the God of Shem but said nothing more about Shem (except Canaan will be his servant).

*-- Gen. 9:27 Is Noah just going to ignore Japheth? ** no

--- Does Noah seem to bless or curse him ** bless him

--- How does Noah bless Japheth? ** (1) Noah asks God to give Japheth many descendants (enlarge him), and (2) he will live in Shem's tents

--- What does it mean by living in Shem's tents? ** again, we know what happened to some of Japheth's descendants since we are all of us here (or at least most of us!) descended from Japheth! This verse seems to mean that Japheth's descendants will learn about the true God (and reap other benefits) from Shem

--- Besides our knowledge of the one true God and our knowledge of how to be right with this God, what else might we have gotten from Shem's descendants in a strictly worldly sense? ** look at how many of our scientists and great thinkers are Jewish!

--- But then how does Noah reinforce his curse on Canaan? ** Noah specifically mentions that

Canaan will be the servant of Japheth, too

--- What does Noah say about the other descendants of Ham? ** apparently nothing

=== We will go into who their descendants are in the next chapter. But just very briefly, it seems that the descendants of Shem settled pretty much in Mesopotamia and Arabia; the descendants of Ham settled mostly in Egypt, though Canaan settled in the land of Canaan (Palestine); and the descendants of Japheth went out to the northern and western lands. It is widely held that the Europeans and Asians and American Indians are descendants of Japheth.

--- So, interestingly, as we look around the world today, which of these sons of Noah seems to have the most descendants? ** Japheth

=== So Japheth was truly "enlarged." In fact, the concordance says his name means "expansion." It also says that "Shem" means "name." (Which makes me think of the name of God.) And "Ham" means "hot." (And Egypt is certainly hot!) I don't know if Noah were either consciously or subconsciously being a prophet when he named his sons about 100 years before this time, so I think I won't speculate on this. But I do find it interesting!

--- Now, from which of the sons of Noah have what is generally thought of as the "Christian nations" been descended? ** from Japheth

--- So would you say that the blessings that Noah pronounced onto his 2 sons, Shem and Japheth, were real prophecies from God? ** yes

=== Shem's descendants the Jews had the real God, and Japheth had lots of descendants and they learned about the real God from Shem's descendants the Jews.

=== The Canaanites were extremely wicked and immoral people and were enemies of the Jews. We'll look at that a little more in the next lesson. Also, they were much later put in subjection by both David and Solomon. And there is a lot of speculation about Canaan's descendants, but since it is only speculation, we aren't going to go into that.

--- Now, going back and looking at all of this, would it seem from the context as if Ham had been concerned for his father in telling Shem and Japheth about Noah's nakedness, or does it seem as if Ham might have been laughing at his father, mocking him? ** it sounds bad, otherwise why would Noah have cursed Ham's son

Here I took out the overlapping generation chart for the women to look at again.

=== I know this will be a review, but let's get it in context here.

*-- Gen. 9:28-29 How long did Noah live after the flood? ** 350 years

--- How old did Noah live to be? ** 950 years

=== From this we can see that Noah lived the 350 years after the beginning of the Flood, since he was 600 when the rains came. I know we've been over this before in detail, but let's just quickly go over it again.

--- And how many generations of his descendants could Noah have talked to? ** 8, clear down to the father of Abraham

=== Now let's take a quick look and see what Noah might have told his descendants.

--- How many of his ancestors could Noah have talked to and learned what they had to say? ** 6 of his 9 direct ancestors.

--- How many of these ancestors could have talked to Adam and have heard 1st hand about living in the Garden of Eden, visiting with God in the "cool of the evening", the Fall, etc? ** 5 of the 6, that is, all of them except Noah's own father Lamech

=== So Noah could have heard about the Garden, etc. just as our children would listen to us tell them something that our parents told us they'd done or seen. It would be a 2nd hand report. Then Noah could have gone ahead and given a 3rd hand report to 8 generations of his descendants! And Noah could have given them a first hand account of the building of the ark and the Flood!

=== This is just one more reassurance we have (besides divine inspiration!) that these records could have been accurately kept. They covered a span of 23 generations or so, but they were kept over a span of just a handful of generations.

REVIEW:

-- What were the names of Noah's 3 sons? ** Shem, Ham, and Japheth
-- Had they been in the ark during the Flood? ** yes
-- What was the result of these 3 sons according to v. 19? ** their descendants spread out over the whole earth and repopulated it
-- What did Noah do, v. 20? ** planted a vineyard
-- And what did he do with the results of this vineyard? ** made wine
-- What did Noah do as a result of the wine? ** he got drunk and was lying naked in his tent
-- Who first saw him and what did he do about it? ** Ham, and he went and told his brothers
-- From what we read, what was evidently Ham's attitude? ** disrespectful
-- What did Ham's brothers do about it? ** the took up some sort of garment and, walking backwards, covered their father
-- What did Noah know when he woke up? ** about Ham and his attitude
-- What did Noah do about this? ** cursed Ham's son Canaan
-- What was the curse? ** that Canaan would be the servant of servants to his relatives
-- Was Noah evidently a prophet? ** yes
-- What further prophecy did Noah make in regards to Ham? ** none that we are told about
-- What prophecy did Noah make about Shem? ** that his Lord God would be blessed and that Canaan would be his servant
-- And what prophecy did Noah make about Japheth? ** that he would become "enlarged" and would "dwell in the tents of Shem" and that Canaan would also be his servant
-- How many years after the Flood did Noah live? ** 350 years
-- So how old did Noah live to be? ** 950 years old

APPLICATIONS:

** We should always be respectful of our parents, even when they are drunk or senile or otherwise incapacitated or simply being foolish.
** Our actions can affect our children and grandchildren and even further down the line of descendants.
** We shouldn't get drunk!
** We should be careful not to put ourselves in a position that might tempt our children to be disrespectful to us.

Chapter 10: Noah's descendants and where they settled

=== Now we come to the 10th chapter of Genesis. We are not going to go into it in much detail at all. This is simply a listing of some of the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth and the areas they settled down in. We are just going to take a general look at this chapter and at the few interesting details that are given.

=== Most people think that Japheth was the oldest son, then Shem, and lastly Ham as the youngest son, though some people think that Shem was the oldest. Most are agreed that Ham was the youngest. They base that on Gen. 9:24 where it speaks of Ham as "his younger son". Gen. 10:21 speaks of "Shem, the brother of Japheth the older". Most think this means "Japheth the older", not "Shem the older." But I don't think it's anything to quibble over! Also, I find it interesting that apparently after the Flood Noah didn't have any more children. At least none are mentioned. So it seems to me that the repopulation of the world was left up to his sons.

--- Since the Flood came when Noah was 600 years old (Gen. 7:11), about how old would the sons have been as they left the ark (Gen. 5:32)? ** about 100 years old

=== That is just an approximation, since, as we saw before, Shem was born when Noah was 502. The third son could have been much younger, though not necessarily. We aren't told. But Noah was 500 when he began having those 3 sons. So to go on.

*-- Gen. 10:1-2, 5 Whose descendants are we talking about here? ** Japheth's

--- And what does it say about them in v. 5? ** that this is the way they are divided up into tongues, countries, and nations

=== We'll notice as we go along that after each son's descendants it will mention that they are listed "after their tongues, countries, and nations" or similar words to that effect. So this is going to show how the world becomes divided up into separate nations as Noah's descendants form first families and then tribes and then into larger nations. We'll find, though as we go along, that it only gives a small handful of generations for most of them.

--- What was the first thing that Noah had prophesied about Japheth back in Gen. 9:27? ** that he would be "enlarged"

=== The descendants of Japheth originally occupied Asia Minor, the countries bordering the northern part of the Mediterranean Sea, and the islands of the Mediterranean Sea. From what I can figure (and I wouldn't be dogmatic about any of this), the Japhethites are the Europeans, Orientals, American Indians, India Indians, and everything else except the Jews, Arabs, North Africans, Egyptians and Africans! So it would seem that his tents were really "enlarged", just as Noah had prophesied!

=== But this is all it says about Japheth's descendants. No interesting details are given about any of them. Though there are a couple of familiar names. The Bible speaks of the "ships of Kittim", and Kittim or Chittim seems to have been the name for at least part of the islands in the Mediterranean Sea.

--- But what is another name in v. 4 that we hear of later in connection with Jonah? ** Tarshish

--- And what did it say about Tarshish in the book of Jonah? ** that this was where Jonah was headed for by ship to escape from God's command to preach to Ninevah!

=== So it was probably far away!

=== By the way, this does not seem to be the same as "Tarsus" where the apostle Paul is from.

=== But let's go on with Genesis 10.

*-- Gen. 10:6, 20 Whose descendants are we talking about here? ** Ham's

--- Which son is mentioned last? ** Canaan

--- Where have we heard about Canaan before? ** back in chapter 9

--- And what about Canaan there? ** that he would be cursed and become the servant of servants

=== It is thought that Canaan was the youngest son of Ham, but it may have been that he is mentioned last because he was cursed, therefore the least important.

=== It gives a lot of names and place names in the intervening verses, but we aren't going to read them. I'll just sort of summarize it for you. The descendants of Ham were originally in Egypt, North Africa and the Land of Canaan (later Palestine). Eventually Ham's descendants became the main ones occupying the continent of Africa except for the Dutch and English South Africans and where the Arabs came in and conquered.

=== By the way, people refer to Ezek. 4:13 which says about Egypt, "...there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt..." and say it means that the Egyptians would no longer rule Egypt. This was written at the time of Nebuchadnezzar who conquered Egypt. After that the Persian took it over with the rest of the Babylonian empire, and the Alexander the Great, a Greek, conquered the Persian empire, including Egypt. When Alexander died, his general Ptolomy took over Egypt, and the Ptolomies who were Greek (with Cleopatra as the last of them) ruled until the Romans took over Egypt. The Romans ruled Egypt after that until Rome fell, and then the rulers of Egypt from the early 600s A.D. have been the Arabs. I don't know just how much time there was between Rome and the conquest of the Arabs and who ruled Egypt in that between period, but it wouldn't have been long.

=== By the way, in v. 6, it speaks of Mizraim. The name Mizraim became synonymous with Egypt in the Bible.

=== But there is something of interest here about one of Ham's descendants.

*-- Gen. 10:8-11 Which descendant is mentioned here, v. 8? ** Nimrod

=== It sounds to me as if Nimrod were a grandson of Ham, though some people think he was a later generation than that. I'm not going to argue about it nor worry about it! He's descended from Ham!

--- But what do we learn about Nimrod? ** he was quite a man -- very important, a hunter, conqueror, empire builder

--- Are the names of 2 of his cities familiar to you? ** yes, Babel and Ninevah

--- Where are we later going to hear about Babel? ** the tower of Babel and then it became Babylon and centuries later the capital of Nebuchadnezzar's empire which conquered the southern kingdom of Judah and ruled the world

--- And where will we later hear about Ninevah? ** centuries later it became the capital city of Assyria (which conquered the northern kingdom of Israel) and that is the city that the prophet Jonah went to after being swallowed by the big fish

=== Lots of people for some reason credit Nimrod with starting the worship of the sun and paganism in general. But I don't know where people get this, so don't quote me on it.

=== Now let's hear about Canaan, the cursed.

*-- Gen. 10:19 Where do the descendants of Canaan seem to have lived? ** in what is now Palestine

=== Notice the familiar names of Sidon and Gaza and Sodom and Gomorrah.

Point out on the map.

=== Also, notice back in v. 16-17, the names of some of the peoples descended from Canaan: the Jebusites, Amorites, Girgasites, and Hivites. Though interestingly, the Perezites are not mentioned.

--- Where do we hear about these people living later? ** in the "Land of Canaan" with Abraham and later with the Children of Israel after they leave Egypt and go into the land of Canaan

=== These are the wicked people that God told the Children of Israel to wipe out when they came back to the Promised Land of Canaan after leaving Egypt. But the Jews didn't completely wipe them out, and they caused a lot of trouble for the Jews. Eventually David and Solomon seem to have subdued them and made them into slaves or near slaves.

=== Some people have tried to say that the blacks are the cursed descendants of Canaan, but there is really nothing Biblical to base that on.

*-- Gen. 10:21-22, 31 Whose descendants are being talked about here? ** Shem's

=== The descendants of Shem were originally in the Arabian Peninsula and parts of Mesopotamia. Today they are principally the Jews and Arabs.

=== And there is something interesting said when Shem's descendants are listed.

*-- Gen. 10:25 What is interesting here? ** it says that in the days of Peleg "the earth divided!"

=== And that's all that is said!! Some people think that a continental split or continental drift came here. However, my personal opinion is that his name probably goes along with chapter 11, when it talks about the Tower of Babel, though I certainly wouldn't be dogmatic about it. But, again, we're not given any details. It was well known what it meant then, like Dec. 7th or 9/11 is well known now but might mean nothing to someone 500 years from now. So we'll just leave it that something of great, world-wide importance happened in the days of Peleg.

--- Looking back at our overlapping generation chart, how long after the Flood was Peleg born? ** 101 years

--- And how long did Peleg live? ** 239 years

--- So how long after the Flood would Peleg have died? ** 340 after it

=== So somewhere between 100 and 340 years after the Flood, something big happened -- the earth "divided!" Whatever that really means! But it seems to me that it must have meant something that was well known at the time that Moses wrote it.

=== Now let's look at what we just went over.

--- How many sons did Japheth have, v. 2? ** 7 sons

--- How many generations does this chapter seem to give of Japheth's descendants, v. 3 and 4? ** only 2, his sons and grandsons

--- From how many sons of Japheth does it name some grandsons, v. 3 and 4? ** only 2 of them

--- Does that necessarily mean that the other 5 sons didn't have sons of their own? ** no

=== But we do have listed from Noah here: Noah's son (Japheth) and Noah's grandsons and great-grandsons, don't we? A total of 3 generations from Noah through Japheth.

--- How many sons did Ham have, v. 6? ** 4

--- How many generations does it seem that this chapter gives of Ham's descendants? ** just 2, his sons and grandsons

--- From how many of Ham's sons does it name some grandsons, v. 7, 13 and 15? ** only 3 of them, Cush and Mizraim and Canaan

--- But again, would that necessarily mean that the other son didn't have any sons? ** no

=== This could just be listing the 3 most important ones, Cush the father of the mighty Nimrod, and Mizraim whose descendants became the Egyptians, and the cursed Canaan whose descendants later became such a plague to the Jews.

=== So again we have listed from Noah here: Noah's son (Ham) and Noah's grandsons and great-grandsons, don't we. A total of 3 generations from Noah through Ham.

--- How many sons did Shem have, v. 22? ** 5

=== Now, since it's sort of confusing, I'll tell you how many generations of Shem's descendants are listed here. Only the sons of 2 of Shem's sons are given. But, again, that doesn't mean the other 3 sons didn't have sons of their own. First it gives the descendants listed from Noah's son (Shem) and Noah's grandson (Aram) and great-grandsons through Aram, a total of 3 generations from Noah through Shem and Aram, just like the 3 generations from Noah listed with Ham and Japheth.

=== But then v. 24-25 name Shem's son Arphaxad and goes on to give a total of 3 more generations from Arphaxad, down through Noah's great-great-great-grandson, Peleg. In addition to that, it then lists in v. 26-29, another whole generation of Peleg's brother Joktan who had 13 sons! So Noah has 6 generations of his descendants through Shem listed as opposed to only 3 generations of his descendants through Ham and Japheth listed.

=== Now, I don't know why it was important to list Joktan's 13 sons, but there is a reason for the additional generations from Arphaxad to Peleg.

--- From what we studied earlier, what would that reason be? ** because it's giving the beginning of the line that will eventually lead to Abraham and the beginning of the Jews

=== But let's think about something else here.

--- Looking back at v. 2, 6, and 22, how many just plain grandsons (not "greats-") does it seem that Noah had? ** Japheth had 7 sons, Ham had 4, and Shem had 5; that equals only 16 grandsons for Noah

--- And what were Shem, Ham, and Japheth supposed to do, Gen. 9:7? ** go out and repopulate the world

=== And they had only 16 sons among them?! Of course, it specifically mentions that just one of these great-great-great-grandsons of Noah had 13 sons of his own!

--- But what else might have figured in this repopulation of the world that was supposed to happen? ** my guess is that they had lots of daughters and that polygamy was widespread

=== In fact, the next chapter carefully says that Shem, Arphaxad, and Arphaxad's descendants had "sons and daughters". But that is only my guess about the polygamy!!! We have absolutely no Bible for that, so don't quote me!

*-- Gen. 10:32 So what has this chapter been about? ** the descendants of Noah

=== And mainly just for 3 generations from Noah, his sons and grandsons and great-grandsons, right?

--- By the way, which son of Noah had the most sons? ** Japheth

--- What had been prophesied about Japheth? ** he would be "enlarged" and dwell in the tents of Shem

=== So, though we aren't given how many grandsons, etc. Japheth had, it would seem to me that his "enlarging" started early!

REVIEW:

-- Again, what is this chapter mainly about? ** just naming Noah's descendants for 2 generations

-- How many sons do we know that Noah had? ** 3, Shem, Ham, and Japheth

-- What were they supposed to do? ** repopulate the earth

-- How many grandsons are listed for Noah? ** 16

-- Which of these sons of Noah has the most generations listed from him? ** Shem

-- And what will be so important about Shem? ** he will be the ancestor of Abraham who will be the ancestor of David who will be the ancestor of Jesus

-- Which grandson of Noah had a bunch of descendants that would later cause a lot of trouble for the Jews as they became a nation, v. 15-17? ** Canaan

-- Two of Noah's descendants had interesting details given about them; who was the first one, v. 8-11? ** Nimrod

-- Which son of Noah was the grandfather of Nimrod? ** Ham

-- What did Nimrod do? ** evidently set out to make an empire for himself
-- And which other descendant of Noah had a little detail given about him, v. 25? ** Peleg
-- Which son of Noah was the ancestor of Peleg? ** Shem
-- What was the interesting detail we got here? ** that it was in his days that the earth "divided"
-- Are we given any more details about this fascinating little statement? ** no!

APPLICATIONS:

** There are a lot of details that we aren't given!
** Mankind truly is all related!
** One of the women said this chapter was too boring to be a fable -- it had to be true!!
** It's good to see how things are all related in the Bible.

Chapter 11: The Tower of Babel; we're introduced to Abraham

=== In the last lesson we looked at some of the descendants of Noah.

-- What were Shem, Ham, and Japheth told to do back in 9:1? ** to multiply and replenish the earth.

*-- Gen. 11:1 What do we hear about the world after the Flood? ** they all spoke the same language

--- Why would that have been? ** because it started out as a father and his 3 sons, then the grandsons, etc. And, as a rule, a family all speaks the same language!

--- By the way, are we told just what language they all spoke? ** no

*-- Gen. 11:2 Where did people go from Mt. Ararat? ** eastward

--- What kind of land did they come to? ** a flat land (plain of Shinar)

*-- Gen. 11:3-4 After living on this plain a while, what did the people decide to do? ** build a city and tower

--- What were they going to use for building materials? ** bricks

--- Just sunbaked bricks? ** no, ones that they evidently dried in an oven

--- What did they use for mortar? ** bitumen, a tarry substance

--- How high was the tower to be? ** "reach to heaven", that is, be a skyscraper, very tall

--- Some people say that they were actually trying to build a tower so tall that they could get into heaven; does that sound reasonable to you? ** not to me

--- Why not? ** if they had wanted to reach heaven itself, they wouldn't have built on a plain that was practically at sea level, but would have tried to build on top of a mountain to get a "head start" toward heaven

=== We call our tall buildings "skyscrapers." We don't really think they scrape the sky; it's just a picturesque term that we use.

--- Why did they want to build a tall tower? ** as a landmark, so that they could congregate around it and not lose track of each other and, therefore, be scattered all around

--- Again, when Noah & his sons came off the ark, what had God told them to do (9:1)? ** fill the earth

--- So were the people who were going to build the tower following God's instructions? ** no, they were trying to stay in one spot

=== Humanly speaking, I don't blame them! It would be scary to head out into the unpopulated world! But they were disobeying God.

*-- Gen. 11:5-6 Who knew what people were doing and why they were doing it? ** God, naturally!

--- This says that the Lord "came down" to see what was going on; do you think that He physically came to earth and looked it over? ** I'd really doubt it, but we aren't given details

--- At any rate, did God approve of this building project? ** no

--- Why not? ** (1) They were being disobedient by not scattering over the earth to repopulate it (though this verse doesn't mention this), and (2) because He knew that this was just the beginning of the mischief that people would get into if they all worked together

--- How was it that the people were able to work together so well, according to God? ** because they were all the same race and language

--- Why did their being one race and language have anything to do with their working well together? ** they were united a front and could understand each other's language and thoughts well

=== You know how within a family the brothers and sisters often have this unity where they understand each other so well. Like when you're playing charades, you don't want siblings on the same team!

--- Did God mean literally that the people would be able to do anything at all that they wanted to do? ** I don't think so; but it would just be so much easier for them to do things

--- Why shouldn't people be able to do all sorts of things (8:21)? ** because people are evil, even their thoughts, from the time they are very young, so they would be doing all sorts of evil things

*-- Gen. 11:7 What was God's solution to this problem? ** to mix up the languages so that the people couldn't understand each other

--- How would this stop the people from all of their big plans they had then and would have in the future? ** if they could no longer understand each other, they couldn't work together

--- How are the languages going to be changed? ** according to this verse, God mixed them up

--- What interesting pronoun does God use for Himself? ** "us"

--- What is interesting about that? ** this is an indication of the Trinity; it doesn't say "3", but "us" means more than 1

*-- Gen. 11:8-9 What were the 2 results of this mixing up of the languages? ** (1) the people didn't stay in one spot, but went out over the earth, and (2) they stopped building the city

--- By the way, Who does it say caused the people to scatter out? ** God

--- Again, why would the mixed up languages make the people scatter out? ** we want to be with people with whom we can communicate, so the people who spoke the same languages would stay together, not mixing with the people they couldn't talk to. Then as the groups formed by language, they would start developing their own customs. Then pretty soon the different groups not only would feel uncomfortable with each other because they couldn't talk with each other, they would also feel uncomfortable with each other because they wouldn't understand the various customs of each other.

--- Is there an example of this among us right close to home? ** yes, right here in our church between the Filipinos and the Caucasians

=== Have you noticed that even now at the church dinners there is a tendency for us to form separate groups according to what language we speak? This is a shame, because we are all of the same family, the Family of God. But we still tend to sit with the people that we can understand more easily, and I think that is very natural. And at other functions, such as the showers, there is sometimes a little difficulty trying to get our various customs together. And this is here at church where we want to get together and get along but are just sort of shy! Imagine if we didn't want to! So I think this is an example of the naturalness of what the confusion of the languages here in the 11th chapter resulted in. The difference of language is a "natural" to separate groups of people, but as Christians we need to work on all being just part of God's family.

--- What became the name of this city? ** Babel

--- Why? ** because it means "confusion", and that is the place where God confused the languages

--- What word do we use now that is associated with the name "Babel" and has to do with languages that we can't understand? ** "babble"

=== We say a baby babbles, don't we? Or that some foreign language is just a bunch of babble to us. In fact, it is thought by many that the word "Babel" came from the sound that all of the languages made, "Bub..bub..bub." ("Babel" is pronounced with a long "a" by some and a short "a" by others, "Bay-bul" or "Bab-ul".)

--- Where did we hear of Babel before (Gen. 10:10)? ** it was evidently started by Nimrod (the grandson of Ham), or at least it was part of the "beginning of his kingdom", he took over that territory

--- By what name do we now know Babel? ** Babylon

--- And where is Babylon? ** in Mesopotamia between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers

=== "Mesopotamia" means "the Land between the Rivers".

--- So where does the Bible say that human civilization started? ** at Babel (or Babylon) in Mesopotamia

--- And where do most historians say that civilization started? ** in Mesopotamia

--- Who is proving whom to be correct, the Bible or historians? ** everything stands or falls by the Bible, of course, so the historians who say civilization started in Mesopotamia are correct because they agree with the Bible

--- When we were looking at the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, where did we say was sort of a central point from where they might have branched out? ** Mesopotamia

=== We studied the last part of this chapter some time ago. But let's just remember that even though we don't know just when the Tower of Babel occurred, at that time Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, and probably Salah & Eber were alive. As I've said before, I personally think it happened around the time of Peleg in whose days "the earth divided", though some may disagree with me on that. But, anyway, Noah was still alive up to the time of Terah, Abraham's father, and Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, and Eber were still alive at the time of Isaac! Think what Abraham or Isaac could have heard 1st & 2nd hand!

=== Remember, when we studied this before, we came to the conclusion that there were only 5 "generations" (that is, 4 "jumps") between Adam and the end of Genesis (@2400 yrs after Creation) when the Jews are down in Egypt: Generation #1 Adam ----> #2 Lamech (Noah's father) ----> #3 Shem ----> #4 Isaac ----> #5 Joseph and his brothers who went into Egypt. Five generations with 4 "jumps" in between them Again, I am not saying that Shem talked to Isaac, I am saying that it would have been possible. So Joseph and his brothers could have heard a 4th hand account of the Garden of Eden and the Fall, and they could have heard a 2nd hand account of the Flood & the Tower of Babel. And people try to say that these things which would have been garbled because they had been passed down for 23 generations one generation at a time!

=== Remember when we first started this class we talked about what the Bible is. The Bible is not just a story book; the Bible is a history book. It is the history of mankind, the history of Jews, and the history of God's dealings with man. It is also a guide book that shows us what God wants from us, how we can please God. And, most importantly, it lets us know who God is and how we can enjoy eternity with Him. I know we've gone over this before, but this is important.

--- Whose God was blessed by Noah, Gen. 9:26? ** the God of Shem

--- And from which son of Noah are the Jews descended? ** Shem

--- So, why is the history of the Jews so important? ** because (1) it was through the Jews that God chose to reveal Himself to us in the Bible, and (2) Jesus, our Lamb of God, in His human form was to come through the Jews

--- From a little later in Genesis, Who does God call Himself the God of, does He say He is the God of Moses or of Job or of whom? ** of Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob

=== Well, we have been following the history of all mankind up to this point, but now the Bible starts specializing. As we can see from the chart we did earlier matching up the chapters of Genesis with the years covered by Genesis, God spends a lot of chapters, about 13, telling us about Abraham, and now we are going to start taking a look at Abraham. I know that we did these next verses a little earlier, but let's just glance at them very quickly so that we have continuity. We're not going to take all of the generations again, but we'll just go through as quickly as we can while still taking in all of the important facts.

=== By the way, Abraham's name was at first Abram; God changed it later. So if I slip up and refer to him by either Abram or Abraham, please bear with me and know who I mean! After Gen. 17, he is only referred to as Abraham, but for 4 chapters we'll try to remember to refer to him as Abram.

--- Whose descendants are listed in v. 10-26? ** Shem's

=== Ten of them, clear down to Abraham!

I did a quick chart just showing these very few generations. It's at the end of this lesson and is also the first part of the "Genealogy from Creation to the Exodus" chart which is found at the end of this booklet in Teacher Helps. I just filled it in as I came to the names.

=== Okay, let's quickly review here. Let's start with Adam.

CHART

--- Which son of Adam are we interested in? ** Seth, who replaced righteous Abel

CHART

--- Then we have several generations to Noah, and which son of Noah are we interested in? ** Shem

CHART

*-- Gen. 11:27-28 So we've gone down to Terah

--- Which of Terah's sons are we interested in? ** Abram

CHART

--- Who were Abram's brother? ** Nahor and Haran

CHART

=== As we went into before, Abram was not the oldest son. However, he's mentioned first here, because he's the most important son in God's eyes.

--- Glancing back up at v. 24, who do you think Terah's son, Nahor, was named after? ** Terah's father

--- What is the name of Abram's nephew? ** Lot

--- Did Terah outlive any of his sons? ** yes, Haran

--- Who was Haran's son? ** Lot

CHART

--- Where were Terah and his family from? ** Ur of the Chaldees

=== By the way, according to my Bible dictionary, it's called "of the Chaldees" because later scribes added place names. People might not know where Ur was, but they knew where Chaldea was. If we were writing about the history of California, we might say "Campo of San Diego." It seems to be the same thing.

--- Ur was in Mesopotamia; what city that we've heard of before was Ur near? ** Babel, or Babylon

=== There has been a lot of excavating done at Ur, and it has revealed "middle class" homes that were quite large, having 10 to 20 rooms. The bottom floor was for servants. In addition to the family rooms, there was a guest room and a chapel. They found a school there in Ur, and there were even clay tablets there which showed that the students studied the 3 R's then, just as they should now. They did multiplication, division, and square and cube root. And there was a bill of lading found from about Abraham's time that showed extensive commerce. So these weren't cave dwellers!

*-- Gen. 11:29-30 Now we hear the names of two of Terah's daughters-in-law; who were they?

** Sarai (Abram's wife) and Milcah (Nahor's wife)

--- Who was Milcah's father? ** Haran

=== Most people think that this was the same Haran as Abram's brother, though Lot isn't mentioned here.

CHART

--- If this were so, what relationship was there between Nahor and his wife? ** uncle and niece

CHART

=== Let's glance ahead at just one verse.

*-- Gen. 20:12 What relationship are we told about Abram and his wife, Sarai? ** that they were half-brother and sister

CHART

=== Sarai is later renamed Sarah by God at the same time as Abram is renamed Abraham.

=== Polygamy was rampant within a few hundred years after the Flood, but we aren't told if Terah were a polygamist or not. We only know that he had at least 2 wives. Perhaps one wife had died; I don't know. We aren't given any details.

=== Intermarriage with close relatives seems to be a natural with people. After all, a person marries someone whom he's around and he knows well, and who are we around most and who do we know better than our relatives? Of course, at first, with man's heredity so pure, it didn't make any difference. But as time went on, it became quite a problem because of the many "bad" genes, so later on laws were made in various countries to prevent marriage between close relatives. But back to Gen. 11.

--- What children did Abram & Sarai have at this time? ** none

--- Why? ** Sarai was barren

*-- Gen. 11:31-32 Who all started out on a trip? ** Terah, Abram, Sarai, and Lot

--- Where did they leave from? ** Ur of the Chaldees, which is in the plain of Shinar

--- Where were they headed? ** the land of Canaan

--- Where did they stop and live? ** Haran

=== I don't know if the city of Haran were already named that or if it were named after Terah's son who had died back in Ur. We aren't told, but my guess would be it was named after Terah's son. Places were often named after people. They still are!

=== Later we learn that Abram's brother and sister-in-law, Nahor and Milcah, were living there also, but we aren't told if they came when Terah and Abram did or later or even if they had come earlier. We're just given no details on that. We're also not told how long Abram and Terah lived in Haran.

--- What is the one thing we're told that Terah did in Haran? ** died

--- Now, if we only had these verses, whose idea would we think it was to leave Ur? ** it sounds like Terah's

*-- Acts 7:2-4 From these verses, though, whose idea was it to leave Ur? ** originally God's, who told Abraham to leave

=== So when Abraham was told to leave his country and relatives (father's house), it sounds as though he left his country but took his relatives (father's house) with him!

--- And how did Abraham know where to go? ** God said He would show him

--- When did God tell Abraham to leave? ** when he was living in Ur, before going to Haran

--- Where did Abraham go? ** Haran

=== Haran is in Syria. That would be the natural route to the land of Canaan, up the river, across, and then down. People didn't want to travel across that big desert directly to Canaan.

--- After what event did Abraham leave Haran? ** after his father Terah died

--- According to v. 4, why does Abraham seem to have left Haran? ** it sounds as if God took him out of Haran

=== We'll go into this more next time.

REVIEW:

-- After the Flood, how many languages were spoken for at least the first few generations? ** one, naturally!

-- What did the people seem concerned might happen, v. 4? ** that they might be scattered around and lose track of each other

-- But what had God told Noah and his sons to do when they first came out of the ark, 9:1? ** to go out and replenish the earth

-- So what did they do about it? ** set out to build a city with a high tower in it

-- Where was this? ** on the plains of Shinar in Mesopotamia

-- What did they use for building material? ** baked bricks put together with bitumen

-- Did God approve of this building project? ** no

-- So what did He do about it? ** He confused their languages so they couldn't understand each other

-- And what was the result of that? ** they scattered around the world as they were supposed to do

-- What was this place named and why? ** Babel, because that means "confusion", and the languages had been confused

-- Then whose ancestry is gone into for the rest of the chapter? ** Abraham's

-- Who was Abram's father? ** Terah

-- Who were his brothers? ** Nahor and Haran

-- And who was his nephew by Haran? ** Lot

-- Who was Abram married to? ** his half-sister Sarai

-- And who was Nahor married to? ** Milcah, probably his niece

-- Where did they live? ** in Ur of the Chaldees

-- Where did they head out for? ** the land of Canaan

-- But where did they stop off? ** Haran

-- And what happened there? ** Terah died

-- From Acts, whose idea had it been for Abraham to leave Ur? ** God's

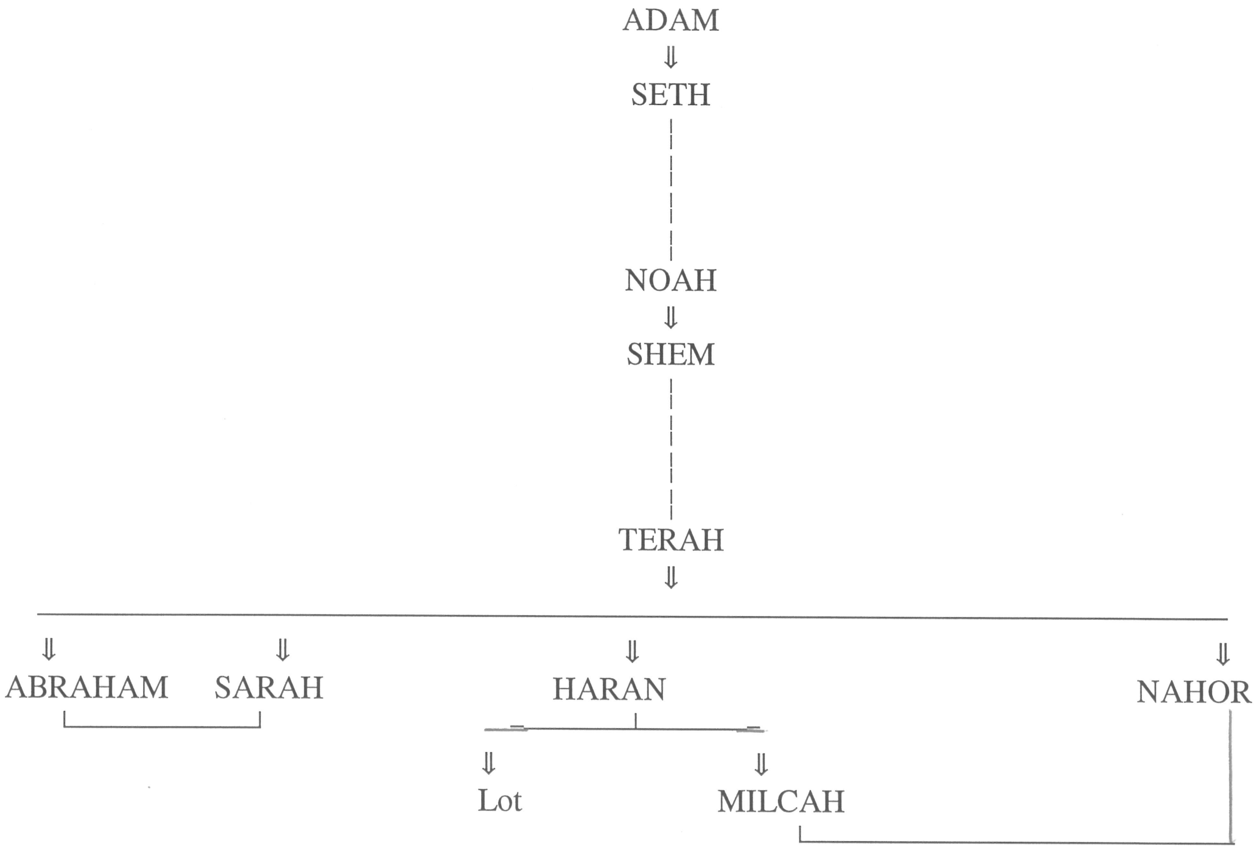
APPLICATIONS:

** God has plans, and He works them out the way He wants.

** When we're told to do something, we should do it God's way, not our way.

** God doesn't always take us directly to where He wants us to go, but we should go anyway and just trust Him.

CHART: GENEALOGY OF ABRAHAM


ADAM
SETH
NOAH
SHEM
TERAH
ABRAHAM
SARAH
HARAN
NAHOR
Lot
MILCAH

Chapters 12 - 25a: Life of Abraham

Chapter 12: Abram Goes to Canaan, Then Egypt

I did a chart of the life of Abraham and filled it in as we went along. A copy of this chart is at the end of this booklet in Teacher Helps.

=== We're now starting with Abraham. It gave a quick rundown on his family in the last few verses of the last chapter and said they left home.
-- What was his father's name? ** Terah
-- His brothers? ** Nahor and Haran
-- His wife? ** Sarai
-- Where had they lived originally? ** in Ur of the Chaldees (Mesopotamia)
-- What happened to brother Haran? ** he died there in Ur
-- Where did they go from Ur? ** to a place named Haran
-- And who died there in Haran? ** Abram's father, Terah

CHART

=== But in Gen. 11 it hadn't really told why they left Ur and went to Haran, did it? Nor whose idea it was to leave.
-- Where had we looked last time that told us why they'd left? ** in Acts 7
-- And why had they left? ** because the Lord had told Abraham to leave there
-- And what was he to have left besides his country? ** his relatives

=== So Abraham left Ur but took with him his wife (which I think God would have expected him to do).
-- But, again, who else went with Abram to Haran, Gen. 11:31? ** his father Terah and his nephew Lot

=== As we said last time, his brother Nahor and wife also ended up in Haran, though we aren't told when they went there. So it sounds as if Abram left his country and distant relatives but took his very close relatives with him!
-- Then after what event had he been told to leave Haran? ** after his father died

=== By the way, Acts 7 is another chapter that you should remember. (Besides Acts 15.) It is what is called Stephen's apology, where Stephen gives a defense as he's on trial before the Sanhedrin. He gives a whole history of the Jews. So Acts 7 is a good review of the Old Testament up into the beginning of I Kings and II Chronicles! It ends with a very strong Gospel pitch that gets Stephen stoned and his becoming the first Christian martyr.

=== Anyway, we have Abraham and his family having left Ur and gone to Haran. Then Terah dies. So let's go on with the story.
*-- Gen. 12:1 Now Who speaks to whom? ** the Lord speaks to Abram
--- And what does the Lord tell him this time? ** to leave his country, relatives, and father's house

=== So the same thing as the Lord told him in Ur, according to Acts. Now, to me, from Acts, it sounds as if Abraham were told to leave Ur, his country and family, so he left but took his family with him. Then after his father dies, then God tells him again now to leave his family. At least we know that his brother Haran is dead (in Ur), his father is dead in Haran, his brother Nahor stays in Haran, and he only takes his nephew Lot with him.
--- And where is Abram to go? ** to a land that God will show him

=== So the verses in Acts that we looked at last time are just a sort of repetition of all of this with a couple of extra details.

*-- Gen. 12:2-3 What does God say in v. 2 that He will do to Abram? ** make a great nation out of him, bless him, make him famous and a blessing

--- God says He will make a great nation out of Abram; how many children do we know of so far that Abram has, Gen. 11:30? ** so far all we have been told is that Sarai is barren.

--- In v. 3, from what God tells Abram, how highly does God seem to regard Abram? ** very

--- Why do you say that? ** because God says He will bless those who bless Abram and curse those who curse Abram, and the whole world will be blessed through Abram

--- What do we know to be a fulfillment of the last part of v. 3? ** Jesus is a descendant of Abraham, and the world has certainly been blessed by having a Saviour make a way to be eternally saved!

=== We aren't going to go into it much, but there are a couple of other views about this 3rd verse as well. I am a very literal person whenever possible, and the view I hold is that, besides Jesus' being a descendant of Abraham (so that our very salvation comes through a descendant of Abraham), the verse also applies to all of the Jewish nation, God's chosen people. I think that we Christian believers come in under the verse, too, as adopted children, but I don't think that we have replaced the "blood" children, the Jews, in the Covenant. I see that throughout history those who have blessed the Jews in general have been blessed, and those who have cursed the Jews in general have had the roof fall in on them. And many of the geniuses of history, who have been such a blessing to mankind, have been Jews. So I think that this promise to Abraham is truly to his literal descendants even today, and that God will bring the Jews back some day. I think that the Jews are today very disobedient children of God, but that God, though punishing them, has not given up on them nor replaced them with the Church. Though we, as believers and adopted Jews (adopted sons of Abraham), share in this blessing of God. I think we Gentiles are the wild olive branch that is grafted into a Jewish trunk, and the trunk still remains Jewish. By the way, I am not saying that Jews will be saved eternally outside of Christ; there is only one way of salvation, and that is through Jesus.

=== Others, including many in our church, believe that the church has replaced the Jewish nation in the Covenant, and that the Jewish nation is through as far as the favored status is concerned (though individuals Jews will be saved). They don't believe that God will bring the nation back to Himself; they believe that the promises to Abraham will be fulfilled through the church rather than to the actual Jewish nation.

=== I talked to Jim Newheiser about this, because I don't want to seem to be causing dissension, and he said it was all right to give my view as long as I gave the other view. Again, I think that probably most people in this church hold to the second view. However, I hold the first view because I take God literally and don't think He will even partially renege on His promise to Abraham.

*-- Gen. 12:4-5 Did Abram obey God and leave Haran? ** yes

--- Who did Abram take with him? ** his nephew Lot, his wife Sarai, and his slaves

--- What else did Abram take with him? ** all of his possessions.

--- What would that probably include? ** herds

--- Where did Abram head out for? ** to the land of Canaan

--- Did he get there? ** yes

--- How old was Abram when he left Haran for Canaan? ** 75

CHART

--- Who was the land of Canaan probably named for? ** Ham's son

--- Where had we just said that Abram had been when God first told him to go to a land He would show him? ** in Mesopotamia

=== Again, I wouldn't be dogmatic about it, but it seems to me that the Lord now told him a second time to do this. We just aren't given all of the details, are we? But the point in that Abram left Haran and is now starting off to an unknown-to-him country, simply following the directions of the Lord.

=== But let's just take a quick look at something else that is connected with this.

*-- Heb. 11:8-10 Why did Abraham go ahead and leave his home and all that he knew? ** because he had faith in the Lord

--- Did he know where he was going? ** no

=== That would take a lot of faith, wouldn't it?! To set out for some unknown place and trust that you'll be shown where to go!

--- What kind of home did Abraham have? ** tents

--- But didn't his son and grandson have permanent homes? ** no, they also lived in tents

--- God had given some promises to Abraham; who else would have these promises? ** Isaac and Jacob, his son and grandson

--- So does that sound as if the promises would be to all of Abraham's descendants or just certain ones? ** just certain ones

--- Abraham had 8 sons, and Isaac had 2 sons, so narrow it down; which of Abraham's descendants would be under these promises of God? ** those through Isaac and then specifically those through Jacob

--- And who are these descendants? ** the 12 tribes of Israel, the Jews

--- Though Abraham lived in tents, what was he looking for, v. 10? ** a city that God had made

--- Did he see this city or receive these promises during his lifetime? ** no

--- What city might that have been that Abraham was looking for? ** I think it was what we call the New Jerusalem, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it

=== We aren't told what all the people way back then knew, are we? Remember all that Enoch, before the Flood, knew according to the book of Jude.

=== Let's look at just one more verse before we go back to our story.

*-- Rom. 4:1-3 What was Abraham's faith in the Lord regarded as, v. 3? ** as righteousness

=== This statement is also give a little later in Genesis and in Gal. 3:6-9. (Remember, to have faith means to believe.)

--- So what justified Abraham before God, his works or his faith? ** his faith

--- If he had been justified by works, what would that have done? ** just given Abraham something to brag about

=== So we see salvation by faith in people of the Old Testament, just as it is in the New Testament.

=== Now, I brought this in from Hebrews and Romans to remind us that the Old Testament and New Testament aren't completely separate, unrelated books. They are connected. And in order to understand the New Testament, we need a foundation in the Old Testament. But now let's get back to Genesis. The Lord had told Abram in Ur to leave his country and family and go to a land that He would show him. Then after father Terah died, the Lord repeated this order to Abram. And Abram did.

*-- Gen. 12:6-9 In v. 6, where does Abram seem to have stopped first in the Land of Canaan? ** Sichem (KJ)

=== This is the same Shechem of Simeon and Levi fame 100 or so years later on; also where centuries later Jeroboam, the first king of the 10 tribes in the northern kingdom of Israel, made his capital. It is evidently on a flat spot among the hills, west of the Jordan, and between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. We'll find the same places popping up all through the

Bible. And many of them are still in existence today. The Bible is not an isolated story of some place that only existed way off in time somewhere.

--- According to v. 6, who lived at Shechem? ** the Canaanites

=== Remember, this is the land of Canaan!

--- And who were the Canaanites? ** the descendants of the cursed son of Ham

--- In v. 7, who visited Abram at Shechem? ** God

--- What did God tell Abram? ** that He would give that land to Abram's descendants

--- What did Abram do after God had talked to him? ** built an altar there to the Lord

--- Where did Abram go next, v. 8? ** south a ways to a spot between Bethel and Ai

--- And what did Abram do there? ** built another altar to God and called on His name

--- What direction did Abram continue in then, v. 9? ** south

*-- Gen. 12:10 Here Abram is in the Land of Canaan, and what happens? ** a famine comes

--- Just a little famine? ** no, a severe one

--- Where did Abram go to escape the famine? ** to Egypt

--- By the way, glance ahead at 13:1; who else seems to have gone down into Egypt with Abram and Sarai? ** their nephew Lot

CHART

--- Why might there not be a famine in Egypt? ** the Nile River would water the land and make it able to grow food

--- Now, we aren't told here, but how might Abram have known about Egypt; after all, it's about 200 miles farther south than he'd ever been, and he didn't have a car?! ** perhaps caravans or the people of the land who were already there had told him; they might even have been going to Egypt themselves because of the famine

=== There is the possibility that God told Abram to go to Egypt, but we aren't told that. Some people condemn Abram for leaving Canaan at this time, but I think we should just stick to the facts. There is a famine, and Abram goes to Egypt.

=== Now let's get 2 details from later in Genesis that will make this story here more understandable. I know we've looked at them before, but it won't hurt us to look at them again, since they apply to this story.

*-- Gen. 17:17 How much older was Abram than his wife Sarai? ** 10 years

*-- Gen. 20:12 Glance at v. 11, who is speaking here? ** Abraham

--- And what double relationship does Abraham have with Sarah? ** she is both his half-sister and his wife

=== With that in mind, let's go back to Gen. 12.

*-- Gen. 12:11-13 What do we know of the appearance of Abram's wife, Sarai? ** she was beautiful

--- How much older than Sarai did we say Abram was? ** 10 yrs.

--- So at least how old was Sarai at this time? ** at least 65!

--- What harm might the beauty of this 65 year old woman bring? ** it might get her ½-brother/husband killed if it were known that they were married

=== So the at least 65 year old Sarai must have been quite a wow!!

--- What does that say for the Egyptians at that time?! ** they don't sound too moral!

=== Of course, you might say that they recognized the sanctity of marriage! Kill the husband first!

--- What plan does Abram propose to save his life? ** that Sarai should say she is his sister

--- So is Abram really telling a lie here? ** no

--- But he is being deceptive, isn't he? ** yes!

*-- Gen. 12:14-15 Does Abram's opinion of his wife's beauty seem to have been justified? ** yes,

the Egyptians thought so, too

--- What did the Egyptians do? ** they praised her beauty to Pharaoh

=== By the way, that seems to indicate to me that the women didn't wear face veils. Otherwise, how would the Egyptians know she was so beautiful?

--- Who is Pharaoh? ** that was a title, like "king"; he was the ruler of Egypt

--- And then what happened? ** she was taken to Pharaoh's house

CHART

=== This could mean into his harem; but I wouldn't be dogmatic about it.

--- Now, this is just speculation, but do you think that Abram might have suspected that such a thing might possibly happen? ** I would think so, otherwise why would he be afraid they might kill him because of her

=== As a woman myself, I find this hard to take! "Let them rape you to save my life! That's not important, and you'll get over it!" But we don't know just exactly what Abram was thinking, so let's not condemn him!

*-- Gen. 12:16-17 How did it affect Abram that Sarai was taken into Pharaoh's house? ** it made him richer; Pharaoh gave Abram lots of herds and slaves

--- How did this affect Pharaoh? ** God plagued Pharaoh and his household

=== This seems to be a fulfillment of God's promise to curse those who did wrong to Abram, doesn't it? Even though Pharaoh didn't know Sarai was Abram's wife!

*-- Gen. 12:18-20 In v. 18, whom does Pharaoh blame for his troubles? ** Abram

--- Do you think he should have blamed God instead? ** no, I guess he figured that if Abram hadn't been deceptive, there wouldn't have been trouble

--- Are we told just what kind of plagues were brought onto Pharaoh and his household? ** no

=== Now, there seems to be a difference of opinion as to what actually happened to Sarai at Pharaoh's palace. Being "brought to his house" could mean that she was taken into the harem. Some people think that Pharaoh actually married her and had sexual relations with her. However, often a man would have lots of women in his harem and only get around to part of them. The others were there "just in case" or for political reason. I personally think that since she was many years later to be the mother of Isaac, the son of promise, that God protected her and that she wasn't harmed. But the Bible is quiet as to what went on here, so let us be quiet, too!

--- By the way, are we told how Pharaoh found out what was really the truth? ** no

=== So there are several things here that we don't know but would like to know! How did God plague Pharaoh? What actually happened to Sarai? How did Pharaoh find out that she was really Abram's wife? We aren't told these, so let's just go on to what we are told. (If we'd needed to know or it was important to the story, God would have had it recorded here!)

--- What did Pharaoh tell Abram to do? ** take his wife and leave Egypt

--- Did Pharaoh take back all of the presents that he'd given to Abram? ** no, Abram took them with him

--- How did Pharaoh make sure that Abram left? ** he had his servants escort them away

Here I'm going to start a chart of the life of Abraham. At the end of each chapter, I'll just briefly put down the events of that chapter along with his age, where he was living, and where it's found in Genesis. There is a copy of this chart in the back of this booklet under "Teacher Helps." (You don't have to do this, of course, but I found it helpful in keeping thing straight.)

CHART

REVIEW:

- -- Where was Abram from? ** Ur, in Mesopotamia
- -- Why did he leave Ur? ** because God told him to
- -- Where did God tell him to go? ** to a land He would show him
- -- Who was he supposed to take with him? ** no one (besides his wife, I'm sure)
- -- Who went with him? ** his father, brother, and nephew
- -- Where did the Lord lead Abram finally? ** into Canaan
- -- What did the Lord say He would do for Abram? ** bless him, make him a great nation, make him a blessing, bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him, make him a blessing to all the earth, give him that land
- -- What happened after Abram reached Canaan? ** there was a famine
- -- Where did Abram go to escape the famine? ** to Egypt
- -- What did Sarai look like? ** very beautiful
- -- About how old was she at this time? ** 65!
- -- What was Abram afraid might happen to him? ** he would be killed to get Sarai
- -- What plan did he come up with? ** for her to say she was his sister
- -- Was this a complete lie? ** no, she was his half-sister
- -- How did Pharaoh find out about Abram's deception? ** the Lord plagued him and his family
- -- Did Abram leave Egypt richer or poorer than when he went in? ** richer from presents Pharaoh had given him

APPLICATIONS:

** The Lord leads people.

** The Lord is able to protect his people.

** When we know that the Lord wants us to do something, we should do it -- and just as He wants.

** We should be one of the ones who blesses the descendants of Abraham.

** It doesn't pay to curse the Jews.

** We are told what we need to know in the Bible, so we shouldn't waste our time speculating on what we aren't told. That could be dangerous and get us away from what is really important and known.

** We are saved by faith (believing), just as Abram was.

** We should give glory to God.

** We should trust God and be obedient even if we can't see the next step.

** We need to trust God enough to tell the truth.

** God can protect His people.

Chapter 13: Abram and Lot Part

--- Where had Abram been at the end of chap. 12? ** Egypt

--- Why? ** because of a famine in Canaan

--- What had happened in Egypt? ** Abram had told Sarai to say she was just his sister, she had been taken in Pharaoh's house, then God plagued Pharaoh because of it, and Pharaoh some way realized that she was his wife, gave her back, and told Abram to leave

*-- Gen. 13:1-2 Who do we find had been with Abram in Egypt besides his wife? ** Lot

--- Who was Lot? ** his nephew by Haran who had died in Ur

--- Where did Abram go, v. 1? ** into the south (KJ) or the Negeb

=== "Negeb" simply means "to be parched, very dry" and refers to the southern part of Canaan, a desert area. So they are leaving Egypt and heading back up into the southern part of the land of Canaan.

--- What kind of financial situation was Abram in at this time, v.2? ** very rich in herds, silver and in gold

--- Where would he have gotten at least some of these riches? ** from Pharaoh in Egypt!

--- But does it seem that he had had anything at all before this time, 12:5? ** to me it does; he had "possessions that he had accumulated" and "persons" which sound like slaves to me

=== But he'd gotten even more things down in Egypt, hadn't he? He was a wealthy man.

*-- Gen. 13:3-4 Where did he go from the southern part of Canaan? ** up to the place where he'd been in Gen. 12:8, between Bethel and Ai

--- What had Abram done the first time he was there? ** built an altar to the Lord

--- So what did Abram do now that he was back there again? ** "called upon the name of the Lord"

--- What does that mean? ** that he worshipped God, probably having some sort of sacrifice

*-- Gen. 13:5-7 Again, who was with Abram at this time? ** his nephew Lot

--- What kind of financial situation was Lot in? ** also very rich in herds

--- OK, we have 2 men who have lots of herds; were their herds all mixed up together into just one herd with one herdsman? ** no, they each had their own herds and herdsmen

--- What is the result of their wealth? ** there wasn't enough pasture land for both of them

--- And what did this lead to? ** trouble between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot as they each tried to get good pastures for their flocks

--- Who besides Lot and Abram and their households were living here, v. 7? ** the Canaanites and Perizzites

--- Why might it mention the Perizzites separately from the Canaanites? ** remember we had said back in chapter 10 that the descendants of Canaan lived there in the land of Canaan (Palestine), and it had named a bunch of "-ites" who were descended from Canaan (10:16-17), but it hadn't mentioned the Perizzites

=== The ancestry of the Perizzites isn't known, but they don't seem to have been descended from Canaan.

*-- Gen. 13:8-9 Does this say there was trouble between Lot and Abram themselves? ** no

--- It doesn't say here, but do you think it could eventually have led to trouble between them? ** I would think so

--- But for what reason does Abram point out that they shouldn't have trouble between the two of them? ** they were close relatives

--- What solution did Abram come up with? ** that Lot choose one direction to take his flocks, then Abram would choose the other direction

--- So who is getting first choice here? ** Nephew Lot

*-- Gen. 13:10-11 Did Lot go ahead and make the first choice? ** yes

--- What choice did he make? ** eastward in the Jordan valley

--- What was this land like? ** beautiful, well watered everywhere, "like Eden" or Egypt -- which would been lots of grasslands

--- Why would Egypt have been good pasture land? ** because of the Nile River

--- And why would the Jordan valley be well watered? ** because of the Jordan River

=== Also I wonder if perhaps the Dead Sea weren't salty then, but I don't know at all.

*-- Gen. 13:12-13 If Lot took the valley, where does this seem to have left Abram? ** in the hills

--- Which man seems to have had the better choice as far as pasture lands? ** Lot

--- In v. 12, where does it say that Lot lived? ** in the cities of the plain, evidently near Sodom

--- What does it say he lived in? ** a tent

=== That sort of sounds as if he lived in the general area of the cities at that time.

--- If Lot had such great herds, how could he live so near a city? ** Remember that he had lots of herdsmen. Lot could have lived near the city (we find that later he lived in the city itself) but had his herdsmen taking care of the herds out in the pastures. Then he could go away from the city and check up on the herds. He wasn't personally guarding the herds.

--- Do we have any idea from the Bible whether Lot was older or younger than Abram? ** no

=== People sometimes condemn Lot, saying that as the "younger nephew", he should have backed off and given his uncle 1st choice. But let's think about it.

*-- Gen. 11:26 How old was Terah when he began to have his 3 sons? ** 70 yrs

*-- Gen. 11:32 How long did Terah live? ** 205 yrs

--- After what event had Abram left Haran? ** after Terah died

--- How old was Abram when he left Haran? ** 75 yrs

--- So how old had Terah been when Abram was born? ** 130 yrs

--- So how many years were there between the time that Terah "began having" his 3 sons and when he had Abram? ** 130 - 70 = 60 yrs.

=== From this I think that we can conclude that either Abram's brother Nahor or his brother Haran (Lot's father) was 60 years older than Abram, don't you?

=== So I think there was certainly the possibility that Lot was much older than Abram (I'm not saying he was, just saying it was very possible). If Haran were the oldest and married at 19, Lot could have been as much as 40 yrs older than Abram. In which case it would only have been proper for Abram to have given his older nephew, the son of his older brother, first choice in the land. Again, I'm not saying that Lot really was 40 yrs older, I'm just pointing out that it would have been very easy for Lot to have been much older than Abram, in which case we can't accuse Lot of being disrespectful to his older uncle. But remember, we really have no proof either way whether Lot were older or younger than Abram. So let's not be quick to criticize Lot by calling him a disrespectful, greedy young upstart!

--- What city is specifically mentioned in v. 13? ** Sodom

--- What does it say about Sodom? ** that the people were very wicked and sinful.

*-- Gen. 13:14-17 After Lot took his herds and moved down into the Jordan plain, who visited Abram? ** God

=== We are not told if this visit were in a dream or if God just spoke to Abram.

--- How many times, at this point, has God talked to Abram? ** from what I can figure, this is the 4th time we have recorded at least, that God appeared to Abram. (1) Acts 7:2, in Ur, (2) Act 7:6, in Haran, (3) Gen 12:6, in Shechem, and now in Gen. 13:14 as he's come back from Egypt into Canaan again and parted with Lot

=== God tells Abram 3 things this time.
--- What is the first one? ** that He will give him all of the land that Abram can see around him
--- The second? ** He would give him uncountable numbers of descendants
--- And the third thing that God told Abram? ** to go explore the land that God was going to give him
--- How many times has God given promises to Abram so far here in Genesis? ** 2
=== We know from looking ahead in Genesis that Abram himself never received those lands. But we might say that they were given to him in trust, that someday his descendants would receive them.
*-- Gen. 13:18 After talking to God in Bethel, where did Abram then go? ** Mamre
--- Why might Abram have moved again? ** God told him to go explore the land he was going to receive
--- What did Abram do there in Mamre? ** built an altar to God.
--- So far, how many altars are we told that Abram built? ** 3, one in Sichem, one in Bethel, and now one in Mamre
--- What city was Mamre near? ** Hebron
=== From what I can figure, Mamre was a spot named after a man whose name was Mamre. Mamre, the man, became an ally of Abraham's. (We'll run into him in the next chapter.) The place evidently had oak trees or some other kind of trees, and that is where Abram lived, there by the oaks. Some of you know the Chancellors, Jacquetta's father. They lived on a little one-block long street. When some officials were mapping the place, they talked to Dennis Chancellor and asked him the name of the street he lived on. It didn't have a name, so they just called it Chancellor Lane. That is the way many places get named. And it seems perhaps to have been that way with Mamre, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it.
=== So let's fill in our chart here for this chapter.
CHART

REVIEW:

-- Who had been in Egypt with Abram besides his wife? ** his nephew, Lot
-- What difficulty arose after they went back into Canaan? ** Lot's and Abram's herdsmen got to fighting about the pastures
-- How did Abram settle this question? ** by having Lot choose where he would go with his flocks, and then Abram would go in the opposite direction
-- Where did Lot choose? ** the well watered plains near the Jordan
-- What city was near where Lot chose? ** Sodom
-- What kind of a city was it? ** very wicked
-- Where did Abram go with his herds? ** it would seem he stayed up in the hills
-- Who appeared to Abram after this? ** the Lord
-- What did the Lord have to say to him? ** He promised him all the land around there forever and that he'd have lots of descendants

APPLICATIONS:

** It is better to have something not quite so good than to have fights with your relatives.
** The Lord can bless us under any circumstances.
** We should work very hard to get along with our relatives and keep the peace with them.

Chapter 14: Abram rescues Lot from Chedorlaomer

=== So let's quickly review the life of Abraham so far. It's so easy to get confused with all of the details when it's actually quite orderly.

-- But first, why is Abram at all important; why are we interested in him? ** because he was the beginning of the Jewish nation through which God revealed Himself to the world and an ancestor of Jesus

-- Where was Abram from originally? ** Ur of the Chaldees

-- Where was Abram when he was first called by God? ** in Ur

-- Where did Abram and his family go from Ur after he was called? ** up the Euphrates to Haran

-- After Abram's father Terah died, what did God tell Abram to do? ** go to a land He would show him

-- When did God give Abram the first promise that we know of? ** when He told him to leave Haran

-- Who was traveling with Abram? ** Lot

-- What happened in Canaan that caused them to leave it and where did they go? ** they went to Egypt because of famine

-- What happened in Egypt? ** Pharaoh took Sarai, made Abram richer

-- So after Pharaoh had them escorted out of Egypt, what trouble came up between men working for Abram and Lot? ** not enough pastures

-- How did Abram settle this problem? ** had Lot choose where he wanted to go then Abram went the other way

-- So where was Lot living now? ** in the Jordan valley near Sodom

-- Where was Abram living now? ** in Mamre

-- What kind of people were living in the land? ** the Canaanites and Perizzites

=== Now we come to a political situation.

*-- Gen. 14:1-2 Very briefly, what does this say happened? ** there are 4 kings who come and make war on 5 kings

--- Do any of the names of people or places of the ones who came sound familiar in v. 1? ** yes, Shinar

--- Where is that and why does it sound familiar? ** over in Mesopotamia, the plain of Shinar is where earlier the tower of Babel was being built

=== So it was farther north up the Euphrates than Ur, where Abram was originally from. Ellasar was in what we'd call southern Babylonia, later Iraq. It seems to have been quite near Ur. They don't know for sure where this Tidal ruled, but it is thought to be in northern Mesopotamia. And Elam was east of the Tigris and Euphrates in what would later be called Persia and is now in Iran.

--- So from what direction can we say that the 4 kings who came to fight were from? ** the east

--- Do any of the names in v. 2, the ones being fought against, sound familiar? ** yes, Sodom and Gomorrah.

--- And where are they? ** in the Jordan valley

=== So we can say that the 5 kings are in the land of Canaan, can't we?

=== Now, remember that there were city-states in those days, just as there were later in Europe. Small independent "kingdoms." Each city-state would have its own king. But from what I can figure, the 4 eastern kings were probably strong, having large cities. Whereas the 5 kings of the land of Canaan were kings of much smaller and weaker cities.

--- And why is Sodom of interest to us at this point? ** because that is where Lot, Abram's nephew settled

--- Gen. 14:3-4 Where is the fighting taking place? ** in the valley around the Dead Sea.

--- From v. 4, what is the situation that seems to have led to this fighting? ** it seems that at an earlier date at least one of the 4 strong kings, Chedorlaomer, had come in and conquered the area around the Dead Sea and put the cities under tribute. They stayed under tribute for 12 years, but then they decided not to pay tribute.

=== Conquering an area and putting it under tribute was a common practice. The conquering king would be the ruler of the conquered area. He would then go home, leaving the conquered area to be governed either by the original king, as under the conqueror, or setting up his own man to be ruler under himself. Often the conqueror would just leave the conquered area alone as long as they sent tribute when they should. Taxes (tribute) in money and goods would be sent to the conquering king at specified times, and the conqueror could also make other rules if he wanted to. The conqueror was sort of an emperor, a big king over other lesser kings who sent taxes (tribute) to him. 1000 years later Kings David and Solomon will be putting the countries around the land of Canaan under tribute.

--- So, after 12 years of serving Chedorlaomer, what do the people living in the land of Canaan do? ** rebel against Chedorlaomer

=== My guess would be that the rebellion consisted of not sending tribute, but it doesn't say in the Bible.

--- Gen. 14:5-7 How long does Chedorlaomer wait to do something about it? ** he evidently saw the year out; gave them time to catch up with whatever they were supposed to have done

--- So what does Chedorlaomer do about it then at the end of that time? ** he comes to the land of Canaan and attacks the rebels

=== Now, it is about 1,000 miles from Babylon (where Shinar is) to the Dead Sea. Centuries later in Ezekiel's time, when the Babylonians conquered the Jews and took them back to Babylon as slaves, it took 3 months to travel with the slaves from Jerusalem to Babylon. So for an army to travel that far would not be a matter of just a few days. My husband says that 15 miles a day is a good march for an army; you can't really expect more than that for any length of time. At that rate, it would have taken over 2 months for Chedorlaomer and his army to march from Babylon to the Dead Sea area.

--- Does he come alone? ** no, he has 3 allies with him

=== We aren't told if the 3 allies had been in on the original conquest or not.

=== So here come Chedorlaomer, Arioch, Amraphel, and Tidal. Naturally they don't march straight across that terrible desert. From the places mentioned it would seem that they go up the Euphrates and then come fighting and pillaging down through the mountains to all along the east side of the Jordan River and Dead Sea, into the mountains in the south, down into a terrible wilderness almost to the Gulf of Akaba (from what I can figure), then swing back up to Kadesh, fighting all around there, and then heading back up to the western side of the Dead Sea. They plan on continuing the pillaging of the rebellious people all the way back up this western side of the Jordan and then head back home via the Euphrates again. This is the way rebelling, previously conquered people are dealt with. But let's watch as they are coming back up to the southern and western part of the Dead Sea area.

*-- Gen. 14:8-9 Who come out to fight these 4 victorious kings? ** 5 kings

--- Again, which name sounds familiar to us from earlier in chapter 13? ** Sodom

--- And, again, why? ** because that is near where Lot settled

=== From the names of these 5 cities, we can see that they are all from around the southern part of the Dead Sea.

--- By the way, does this mean that kings in other cities in the other areas didn't fight? ** no

--- Then why are we going to be interested in these particular cities? ** again, because Lot is at Sodom

=== We don't really have any interest in the other places, do we? They aren't connected with Abram.

*-- Gen. 14:10 The valley of Siddim seems to have been another name for the Jordan Valley; what was in the valley at the place where the fighting occurred? ** tar pits

=== According to my Bible dictionary, there are still some tar pits around there.

--- Who seemed to be winning? ** Chedorlaomer and his 3 allies

--- Why do you say this? ** because the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah

=== Now there is a difference in translations here. Some seem to indicate that the kings fell into the tar pits. Others insert "some" and indicate that some people fell into the tar pits. My son checked out the Hebrew, and it doesn't have the word "some" in it and seems to be saying that the kings fell into them.

=== Actually the word "fall" could mean either that they actually fell into the tar pits or that they "fell" in the sense that they died there. Either way, it sounds to me as if these present kings were out of the way.

=== Are you familiar with the La Brea tar pits in Los Angeles? What happened to things caught in them in ancient times?!

--- And what did the rest of the people do? ** took off for the hills

*-- Gen. 14:11-12 Now we see here how the conquering kings treated the rebelling cities; in v. 11, what did they do? ** sacked them

--- What else did they take besides anything of value and the food, v. 12? ** Lot

--- And who is Lot? ** Abram's nephew

--- Where had Lot been living? ** in or near Sodom

=== We'll find out later that they took other captives also. But Lot is the only one that we're interested in.

--- But why would these fierce kings have taken captives; what do they want with them? ** slaves

=== Now let's think about something a minute here before we go on. These 4 kings have traveled over 2 months to get to this area, and then they have sacked it and taken the people as captives.

--- What good, beyond the loot and slaves they'd taken, would this do them? ** it would be a lesson to other areas they had under tribute not to get any ideas of rebelling, but to be sure to send their tribute

=== So this is not only punishment, it is for an example to others, isn't it?

*-- Gen. 14:13 Who was living in the mountains west of the Jordan valley? ** Abram

--- What does it call Abram here? ** "the Hebrew"

=== This is the first time this term is used in the Bible. There is a little debate where this term came from. Most people seem to think that it simply means a descendant of Eber (Gen. 11:15), one of Abram's ancestors. But the name means "across." So some people say it was a term used of immigrants, and Abram was an immigrant to the area. We're not going to worry about it, though!

--- Had Abram been able to make any friends in the area? ** yes, he was allied with 3 brothers or relatives: Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner

--- Where had we heard the name "Mamre" before, 13:18? ** Abram was living in the plain of Mamre

--- How did Abram come to hear what had happened? ** someone who had escape being captured by Chedorlaomer and his 3 allies came and told him

=== Remember back in v. 10 where it says that those that remained fled to the mountains. And Abram was in the mountains.

*-- Gen. 14:14 What really got Abram's attention? ** that his nephew had been captured

=== It's probably a good 25 or more miles from Sodom to Hebron where Abram lived in the mountains. Even if he were on horseback (which it doesn't say here), it would still have been quite a trip. So one can't help but wonder why the person went all that way. Was he just trying to get far away from Chedorlaomer or did he know that Lot and Abram were related. And then was he just the bearer of bad news, or did he expect Abram to do something about it? It sounds to me as if perhaps Abram were well known over a wide area. Or was the man just escaping from Chedorlaomer and happened to end up there and tell his story? But the Bible gives us no details on this.

--- What did Abram do about this news? ** got his "home army" together and took off after Chedorlaomer and the others

=== Now, before we go on, let's do a little thinking about Abram. I sometimes picture him as living with Sarai in a little tent and having a few sheep and cows. But here we have just seen that he had a small army of his own.

--- What is specifically mentioned about these men? ** there were 318 of them who had been born right there in Abram's own household and trained and drilled as soldiers

--- Let's think some more; was all of Abram's wealth new; had he just gotten it in Egypt or just been gathering it up? ** no, because these soldiers had been born in Abram's household, so Abram had to have had their mothers before them and then have had them long enough for the babies to grow up and be trained as soldiers

=== We know that Abram had slaves when he left Haran (12:5), but that was only a few years earlier.

=== As a rule I wouldn't think of a soldier as much under 15 years old, so Abram had to have had lots of slaves (which are wealth in themselves) for many years. My guess is that he brought them with him from Haran, maybe even some from Ur. We know that he had been in the land of Canaan well under 11 years, because he was 75 when he left Haran and he'll be 86 over in chapter 16 when Ishmael is born later. And in less than 11 years he couldn't have raised up an army born in his own household. But back to the excitement! Abram's been told the news of his nephew Lot, and now he's gotten his own home grown army together.

--- Does it sound as if Abram's men were just going to fight hand to hand combat with Chedorlaomer? ** no, Abram armed them

=== The KJ says he armed them, but the NAS says he just led them out. However, I can't imagine that they didn't have some sort of weapons. After all, they wouldn't be fighting with their fists.

=== We aren't told what arms they used, though.

--- How far did Abram have to chase after Chedorlaomer and his allies before he caught up with them? ** clear up to Dan

=== Over 100 miles north of Hebron where he was living.

=== From the place names we can see that Chedorlaomer and his allies were sweeping down the valley on one side of the Jordan River and then up the valley on the other side of the river. And they weren't making forays off up into the mountains.

*-- Gen. 14:15 Chedorlaomer and his buddies may have had 3 or 4,000 soldiers with them. Let's say that Abram's 3 allies each had 350 men with them. That still only gives Abram about

1300 men against probably a good 3,000. How did Abram come out in the fight, win or lose? ** he won

--- How did he win? ** he divided his men up, so that it would seem to Chedorlaomer that they were surrounded; then he attacked at night, probably by surprise

=== It was a Gideon-like victory, it seems to me. The enemy would be surprised and confused. Also, they probably weren't expecting to be followed and attacked.

--- Did Abram stop fighting right away? ** no, he chased the enemy up almost to Damascus

=== So after beating this huge army, he chased them about 50 more miles as they took off out for home!

=== Of course, something else we need to consider is that, even though it isn't mentioned right here, the Lord would have been on Abram's side! And that's the important thing!

*-- Gen. 14:16 Were Chedorlaomer and his buddies able to take their ill-gotten gains with them as they high-tailed it for home? ** no

--- What happened to all of the spoils of war? ** Abram took them back with him

--- What did these spoils of war consist of? ** people, "goods", and Lot and his "goods"

=== I find it interesting that "women" and "people" are mentioned separately! I won't speculate on it, though.

*-- Gen. 14:17 The Valley of Shaveh is the valley of the Kidron, the river that flows just north of Jerusalem; who went out to meet the triumphant Abram as he approached Jerusalem? ** the king of Sodom

--- But what had it said in v. 10 had happened to the king of Sodom? ** he'd fallen at the tar pits.

=== I don't know whether he got out or if this is the next in line to the throne who had taken over. But we're not going to worry about it; that's not the point of this.

--- Also, would it seem that Chedorlaomer had taken all of the people from the areas he was sacking? ** no

--- What makes you say that? ** because there is now at least someone who is the king of Sodom

=== Also, remember the man who escaped and told Abram about this. So others had probably escaped, too.

*--- Gen. 14:18 Who else came out to meet Abram there near Jerusalem? ** Melchizedek

--- What did Melchizedek do? ** brought out bread and wine for Abram and his men

--- What does this verse tell us about Melchizedek? ** he was king of Salem (later Jerusalem) and a priest of the most high God

--- Now the Canaanites were pagans; but does it sound as if Abram were the only believer in the one true God in the area? ** no, not if Melchizedek were a priest of God

=== But we aren't told if there were lots of other true believers or anything else about the religious situation.

*-- Gen. 14:19 What is the first thing that it says that Melchizedek did for Abram here in this verse? ** blessed him

--- What else did Melchizedek say about God? ** that God owned heaven and earth

--- As a rule, who blesses whom when there are 2 people, does the lesser person bless the more important or what? ** no, the person with the higher position blesses the lesser person

--- But again, who is blessing whom in this verse? ** Melchizedek blessed Abram

--- What does this seem to be implying about Melchizedek? ** that he is greater than Abram

=== Of course, Melchizedek was a priest of God, so his position was important.

--- What did Melchizedek want God to do? ** to bless Abram

--- What else does this say about Melchizedek here? ** nothing!

=== And except for a prophetic psalm (110:4) that is all the Old Testament tells us about him!

=== Heb. 7:1-4 talks about him as a mystery figure; we don't know anything about him, not even his ancestry. And Heb. 5:5-6 says that Melchizedek is a "type" of Christ, who is our eternal High Priest. There are some who think this was actually Noah's son Shem (who would still have been alive at the time), but there is no Bible at all to base that on. In fact, except for these few verses in Genesis, one verse in Psalm 110, and 9 times in Hebrews, he's never mentioned again. But back to Genesis.

*-- Gen. 14:20 Who else did Melchizedek bless? ** the most high God

--- Who did Melchizedek say was responsible for Abram's victory? ** God

--- What happened at the end of the verse? ** Abram gave Melchizedek a tithe (1/10th - Heb. 7:4) of the spoils

--- Does this seem to be something Abram felt he was required to do or something that Abram seems to have wanted to do? ** we aren't really told, but my guess would be that Abram wanted to give it

--- By the way, again, who would usually give a gift to someone, the less important to the more important, or the more important to the less important? ** again, the less important would give to the more important

--- So, again, what does this seem to indicate about the positions of Abram and Melchizedek? ** that Melchizedek was more important than Abram

=== Though one might possibly say that Abram was repaying his host. However, this seems to me to be a gift given out of respect.

*-- Gen. 14:21 What does the king of Sodom want Abram to give him? ** all of the people back

--- But what about the "goods?" ** he said that Abram could keep the rest of the spoils (money, clothes, herds, etc.)

=== I find it surprising that the king of Sodom was willing to give up all of the other stuff. Though, of course, Abram and his allies had a big army there! You don't argue with that!

*-- Gen. 14:22 But to Whom had Abram evidently made an oath? ** to the Lord God

--- How does Abram describe the Lord? ** as the most high God, the one who owns the heaven and the earth

*-- Gen. 14:23 What had Abram sworn to the Lord? ** that he wouldn't take anything from the king of Sodom

--- Why not? ** because he doesn't want the king to be able to say that he was the one who had made Abram rich.

--- Was Abram rich? ** yes

--- Who had actually made Abram rich? ** God

*-- Gen. 14:24 But Abram said he would take 2 things; what was the first? ** whatever his soldiers had eaten

--- And what was the second? ** the shares that his 3 allies should receive

--- Why would Abram let his allies take a share if he himself wouldn't? ** he had made the oath for himself, not for them; and this would be their reward for helping him

--- Do you think that Abram did the right thing? ** yes; he was bound to give God all of the credit for any success that he had; but he didn't have to hold his allies to his oath for himself

=== Also, if he didn't let them have a share, they might not be so willing to help him the next time he needed them or be quite so friendly toward him.

CHART -- fill in for chapter 14

REVIEW:

-- What was the political situation? ** eastern kings have subjected the cities around Dead Sea for 12 yrs. Then they revolted and the eastern kings came and reconquered and sacked the cities
-- Who was captured? ** Lot
-- What did Abram do? ** Took his own soldiers and his 3 allies and defeated the eastern kings and retook slaves and goods
-- What unusual character? ** Melchizedek
-- What did the king of Sodom offer? ** Told Abram to take all of the goods but give back the people
-- What did Abram do? ** Refused except for the food the soldiers ate and his allies share of the reward

APPLICATION:

** Getting "the best" doesn't always mean it's really the best.
** We should help our friends.
** We don't always need to take rewards for doing good.
** We should remember to give back to the Lord part of what He has given us.
** We should always give the Lord the credit for the good that we have.
** It's good to have allies, friends.
** God very often uses physical means to do His will.
** We should be prepared for misfortunes.
** We should be prepared to help others.

Chapter 15: God Promises Again, this time with Divided Sacrifice

=== We are chugging along now in the life of Abraham.

-- Again, why are we so interested in Abraham; why does God devote so many chapters to his life? ** because he is the beginning of the Jewish nation through which God will reveal Himself to the world, and the direct ancestor of Jesus

*-- Gen. 15:1 After what "things" does this chapter open? ** after Abram had rescued Lot from the kings of the east

--- Who talked to Abram after all of these things? ** God

--- How did God appear to Abram? ** in a vision

--- What did God say to Abram? ** not to be afraid, that God was a shield to Abram (a protector) and would be his reward

--- Was Abram already rich? ** yes

--- Where did we hear that (13:2)? ** when he came out of Egypt

=== The word is "reward", though, and it seems to mean more of wages rather than simply rich. But it does sound to me as if he would be richer still.

=== We can't know for sure, of course, since we aren't told, but I can't help but wonder if perhaps God told him this because of the riches that Abram had refused to take from the king of Sodom. Also, might God have been reassuring Abram that he didn't need to worry about those 4 kings coming back and getting him. But we aren't told this, so I guess we shouldn't speculate. Anyway, God will reward Abram in some way and protect him. Of course, one might think that simply that God was the God of Abraham was the reward, but from the next verses, I think we can see that Abram, at least, took it to mean more than that.

*-- Gen. 15:2-3 In your own words, what is Abram's ungracious reply to God? ** "what can you give me that will make any difference since I have no children"

--- From these verses, how would you say that Abram regarded all of the riches that he already had? ** not of much use without children to pass them on to

=== Haven't you heard or read about rich people talking like that, that what good was all that they had amassed since they didn't have any children to pass it on to? I have.

--- Who was Abram's heir? ** a man named Eliezer

--- Where was Eliezer from? ** Damascus

=== One wonders just from reading the verse how Eliezer could have been from Damascus and also "born in Abram's house". But Strong's Concordance says that the Hebrew words used to describe Eliezer ("the steward of my house" and "one born in my house") are both the same phrase and both mean "the son of my house", which means his heir. The word for "steward" or "son" here is the same word, "ben", meaning "son of". But this word is used in many different senses besides being an actual, literal blood son of someone. It can mean to belong to someone or some thing, though it doesn't necessarily mean a slave who had been born in the household. Back in 14:14 where it talks about the trained servants who had been born into Abram's house, it is a different, unrelated word for "born." That word actually means to be born. So what this verse here means is simply that Abram had no blood children to be his heir.

--- So from this complaint of Abram's can we figure that God meant by "reward" something other the fact that God would be his God? ** yes

=== That in itself would be a great reward, of course, but this sounds to me as if there were to be something material involved, also.

*-- Gen. 15:4 Did the Lord reprove Abram for his reply? ** no

--- What did the Lord say about Eliezer? ** that he wouldn't be Abram's heir

--- Instead, what wonderful news did God give Abram? ** that he would have a real, blood-line son of his own who would be his heir

*-- Gen. 15:5 Where had Abram evidently been as he's having this vision? ** inside

--- And where did God take him? ** outside

--- Are we told whether Abram went outside physically or in the spirit? ** no

--- But does that really make any difference at this point? ** no

--- Now, there is a saying that a picture is worth a 1000 words; what does God use to make a word picture for Abram? ** the stars

--- And what did God say about the stars? ** that Abram would have descendants without number like the stars

=== Abram would see a lot more stars than we do, wouldn't he? There were no city lights then!

--- Had God ever told Abram before that Abram would have descendants? ** yes, in Gen. 12:2 "a great nation"; Gen. 12:7 "unto your seed..."; Gen. 13:16 "your seed as many as the dust of the earth"

*-- Gen. 15:6 How did Abram react to this promise of the Lord? ** he believed Him

--- Does God seem to have said "shame on you; you're a disgrace for not having believed me before? ** no

--- Instead, how does God regard Abram's belief? ** as righteousness

=== Remember, we read that in the New Testament, too, in both Romans and Galatians, didn't we?

=== Now, if we look at the book of Galatians and Acts 15, we find there that some of the believing Jews had been trying to get the Gentile Christians to be circumcised. This was the beginning of the law of Moses, and they figured that it was a necessary thing to do for righteousness before the Lord.

--- But, in fact, how long at the time of Abram until there would even be a law of Moses? ** about 400 years

--- And had Abram been circumcised at this point here? ** no

--- So are there different ways of obtaining righteousness in the Old and New Testaments? ** no

--- What is the way to obtain righteousness in both the Old and New Testaments? ** both have to do with believing God, with faith

=== But let's get back to Abram here. God has promised Abram that he will have a son and many descendants. And Abram has believed God, and this was counted to him as righteousness.

*-- Gen. 15:7 How does God identify Himself to Abram? ** He says He is the One who took Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees

--- Why might God have spoken in what seems to us such strange terms "I am the Lord Who.."? ** I think it's because places had regional "gods"; it seems to me that God is saying that He is not a regional god but is the same God as had been back in Ur

--- For what reason does God say that He took Abram out of Ur? ** in order to give Abram the land there

=== Now, notice how God words the part about giving Abram the land; it seems to be redundant. "...I brought you out...to give you this land to possess (inherit-KJ) it." So I looked up the word "inherit" or "possess" in Strong's. It is quite a strong word. It doesn't just mean to have something. It means to really have it. It actually means to occupy by driving out the previous people and taking it for yourself instead! To dispossess or impoverish the other people! It means a permanent possession. It can also mean to be designated as the permanent heir. It is the same word that Abram had used about Eliezer back in v. 2. So God is promising a permanent possession of the land to Abram. I thought that was all interesting, so you get to share in it!

--- If Abram is to have this land as a permanent possession, does it seem reasonable that his descendants will also have the land after him? ** it would seem so to me

--- What had the Lord earlier told Abram about his descendants and the land back when he had parted from Lot in 13:15? ** that both Abram and his seed would inherit the land forever

--- Did Abram get that land in his lifetime? ** no

--- Have his descendants possessed that land permanently throughout all of their generations? ** no

--- Does God break His promises? ** no!

--- So do you think that Abram and his descendants will someday permanently possess that land? ** it certainly seems so to me, if God is to keep His word

--- And does God always keep his word? ** yes!

--- And when would that evidently be? ** after the return of Christ

=== And, as we said before, this seems to be a promise to Abram and his blood descendants, not "the church." I don't believe that the church will displace the Jews; I don't believe that the Lord will renege on His clear promise to Abram about having a blood son of his own and descendants who will inherit the land forever. I know that there are those who disagree with me, though.

=== But to go on.

*-- Gen. 15:8 What did Abram ask for? ** a sign

--- Why does Abram want a sign? ** so he can know that God will really give that land as He said

--- Does that sound like belief to you? ** not to me

--- But what had Abram believed earlier? ** that he would have a son and unnumbered descendants

=== I don't know why Abram believed about his descendants being so numerous but had trouble believing that they'd inherit the land. Of course, it might have been one thing to know he'd have children but another thing to know that those children would someday own the land where he was himself just living as a foreigner.

*-- Gen. 15:9-10 It seems to me that we are told specifically in the New Testament not to ask for signs, but simply to trust God; here does God seem to be upset with Abram for asking for a sign? ** there is no indication here to that effect

--- Abram has asked for a sign; what does God tell him to do in preparation for the sign? ** to make a sacrifice of a female cow, a female goat, and a ram, each 3 years old and a turtledove and a young pigeon

=== Very specific!

--- What did Abram do with these animals? ** cut the animals (not the birds) in half and laid the halves out beside each other

=== My guess (and that's all it is!) is that Abram put one bird on one side and the other bird on the other, making everything even.

=== Now I think we need to be careful here, as this comes in the area of speculation, I think.

--- But does this sound to you at this point like just a vision in a dream or that Abram is actually doing something? ** to me it sounds as if Abram actually hears the Lord's voice and is physically working with these animals

=== I don't think Abram's going to wake up and find no dead animals.

*-- Gen. 15:11 Did God then immediately give the sign that Abram had asked for? ** no

--- What makes you say that? ** because there's at least enough time for birds to come and try to settle on the meat

--- And what happened when the birds came and tried to settle on the meat? ** Abram drove the birds away

=== Again, this sounds to me as if Abram is actually physically doing something.

*-- Gen. 15:12 What time is it in this verse? ** the sun started going down

--- Two things happened to Abram as sundown was approaching; what was the first thing? ** he fell into a deep sleep

--- And then what happened to him? ** a darkness came on him

--- Just a little darkness? ** no, it was thick, great

--- How else is this darkness described? ** as a terror, horror, dreadful

*-- Gen. 15:13-14 Abram had asked for a sign, God had had him prepare a sacrifice. Then Abram falls into a deep sleep and a horrible darkness comes on him.

--- Who now speaks to Abram at this time? ** the Lord

=== In these 2 verses the Lord is going to tell him 5 things.

--- About whom does the Lord tell Abram these 5 things? ** about Abram's descendants

--- What is the first thing that Abram is told about his descendants? ** they will be strangers in a land that didn't belong to them

--- Just as an aside here, did Canaan belong to them at this time? ** no

--- And when years later they go down into Egypt, did Egypt belong to them? ** no

--- What is the second thing he's told about his descendants? ** they will serve someone and be afflicted

--- The third thing? ** all this will go on for 400 years

--- The fourth isn't about Abram's descendants themselves, but what is it? ** the afflicting nation will be judged

--- And the fifth thing? ** his descendants will come out and be rich

=== This is what is called predestination, isn't it!

=== But the Lord isn't through giving prophesies to Abram yet.

*-- Gen. 15:15 How long will Abram live? ** to a good old age

--- How will Abram die? ** peacefully

--- Why might the Lord have told Abram this? ** well, He'd just gotten through talking about serving another nation and being afflicted, which doesn't sound very good, so perhaps this was a reassurance to Abram

*-- Gen. 15:16 But then what further detail is given about Abram's descendants? ** in the 4th generation they will "come back here"

--- We aren't told the city where Abram is at this time, but where in general is he? ** in the land of Canaan

--- So where is "here" in this prophecy? ** the land of Canaan

--- So does it sound as if Abram's descendants will at some point leave Canaan? ** yes -- they couldn't "come back" if they hadn't left!

--- But how many generations will they be out of the land of Canaan? ** 4

--- Does this sound like just a figurative statement or does it sound like a literal statement to you? ** to me it sounds literal; Abram's descendants will be out of the land of Canaan for 4 generations and then come back

=== We'll get into that more when we get to the book of Exodus.

--- Why was God waiting so long, end of the verse? ** because the iniquity of the Amorites wasn't yet "full"

--- So, does God always punish sins immediately? ** no, sometimes God lets them get "full" as with the Amorites

--- Who were the Amorites? ** one of the group of Canaanites, descendants of the cursed Canaan

--- So does it sound as if these descendants of Canaan were doing well morally? ** no!

--- And what seems to be tied up with when the iniquity of the Amorites is full, according to this verse? ** it seems to have something to do with when Abram's descendants "come back here"

--- So what might we perhaps infer from this? ** that in some way Abram's descendants will have to do with the punishment of the wicked Amorites

--- Now, is this promise an actual sign for Abram himself, will he see the fulfillment of it? ** no, it is just a prophecy and promise for Abram

--- But would it be a sign for anyone else? ** yes

--- For whom was it going to be a sign? ** it served as a sign for future generations who would be living at the time of its fulfillment (Imagine if you're of the generation that leaves Canaan. "Four generations and we'll be back"!"), also it would be a sign for even further generations (even like us!) who could look back on it and see that God really did do things as He said He would and that God's Words were true

=== When we look back and see the fulfillment of God's prophesies in the past, we can be assured that future prophecies will also be fulfilled, can't we?

--- So, again, does it sound as if Abram's descendants were always going to be living where Abram was at that time? ** no

--- And after they leave there in the land of Canaan, when do they know that they will be back there again? ** in the fourth generation

=== Again, we'll get into that more when we get to the book of Exodus.

*-- Gen. 15:17 Did Abram himself receive any sign at all? ** yes

--- What was it? ** when it was dark (after sundown) a smoking oven and burning lamp passed between the divided sacrifice

=== I don't know if those are 2 separate things or if they are one thing with just a repetition for emphasis. However, I'm wondering if this is just one thing, some sort of vessel that had smoke and fire coming out of it. But I don't really know. But it makes me think of Mt. Sinai a]with the lightning and smoke!

=== As I understand it, often when a covenant was to be made, animals would be cut in half and the 2 halves laid out opposite each other. Then the covenant maker or makers would walk down between the two halves as a sign of having made the covenant.

--- Did Abram walk between the sacrifices? ** no, just the smoking oven and burning lamp

--- So Who is going to be held to the covenant here; which One is to do something? ** God is promising to do something

--- Does it sound as if Abram is bound to do anything by this covenant? ** not to me

--- So Whom can we presume that this smoking oven and burning lamp were a picture of? ** of the Lord

=== I have a book on customs during the Bible times. It says that at least in India that a burning lamp or fire is still used as a "witness" to a covenant. Then if someone doubts what you've said, you point to the flame of the lamp and say, "There is my witness." The Lord is sometimes represented by fire else where in the Bible (Moses and the burning bush, for example), so it sounds to me as if here the fire represents the Lord Himself.

=== So this is a one-sided covenant, isn't it? Abram isn't told to do anything. Just the Lord pledges to do something.

=== Now, the way I see it, Abram fixed the animals for the sacrifice then waited. As the sun was starting to go down, then the darkness and deep sleep came on Abram and the Lord spoke to Abram, giving him those promises. Then after giving these promises, by that time the sun was completely down, and the Lord passed between the sacrifices in the form of the smoke and flames. You can imagine the drama of that. Here is a terrible, horrifying darkness, the voice of God is heard, and then this smoke and flames are seen passing between the parts of the animals. The Lord was committing Himself to what He had just said. But He has more to say. It seems to me that these next verses aren't a repetition but are said after the Lord has made these prophecies, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it. But I don't think the actual order of when they come is the important thing here, so I'm not going to worry about it.

*-- Gen. 15:18-21 So when do these verses take place, v. 18? ** in the same day that we just got through reading about

--- And what did the Lord do in that day, in the first part of v. 18? ** made a covenant with Abram

--- What is that covenant about? ** about the land that his descendants would someday have

--- How would they get this land? ** the Lord would give it to them

=== Before the Lord had just told Abram that he and his seed would inherit "the land" or "the land that he could see." But now He gets specific.

--- So then God told some borders of the land that He would give to Abram's descendants; what were they? ** the river of Egypt to the Euphrates River

=== The river of Egypt is not the Nile River. Instead it is a river down on the southern border of Judah which forms the border between Palestine and the Sinai Peninsula. I would imagine that was far more land than Abram had thought before, though we aren't told.

--- Were these unoccupied, new territories that God promised to Abram for his descendants? ** no, they were inhabited by all of the listed peoples

=== Only the ones in v. 21 seem to be descended from Canaan. The others are other peoples.

--- From Gen. 13:13 and Gen. 15:16, what do we know about some of these people who then occupied the land of Canaan? ** Sodom's people were very wicked, and the Amorites were iniquitous

=== Now let's just think about something here.

--- Who was going to possess those lands? ** Abram and his seed

--- Were Abram and his descendants going to have some rough times? ** yes

--- For how long? ** 400 years

--- So was Abram going to have part in all of their troubles? ** no, certainly not for 400 years!

--- We can't be sure here, but if Abram were going to inherit the land, yet he was going to die peaceably and his seed inherit it after all of these troubles, if Abram really believed he himself would inherit it as the Lord has said, how might Abram have figured that he himself would inherit it? ** I'm not sure, but it seems to me that he was thinking of his resurrection

--- Do we have from the Bible anything that might make us think that the people of this time knew at least something about the resurrection? ** in the book of Jude where it tells what Enoch had known

--- And when had Enoch lived? ** before the Flood

=== Now let's think about something else here. 1000 years later during the reigns of David and Solomon, these lands were actually part of their kingdoms.

--- But did the kings after David and Solomon keep all of these lands? ** no

--- So could the fact that David and Solomon had ruled over them count as the descendants of Abram owning it as a permanent possession? ** no

--- So, once again, when will they have it forever as promised in 13:15 ** sometime in the future, actually after the return of Christ
=== But in this chapter the prophecies have mostly been about details of the next 400 or so years with hints of a permanent possession and the extent of it.
CHART

REVIEW:

-- Who appeared to Abram in this chapter? ** the Lord
-- What was Abram's initial reaction to God's promises of rewards? ** how could He reward him, since he was childless
-- What did God say about that? ** Abram would have a direct heir, descended from him
-- To what does God compare Abram's descendants this time? ** stars
-- What was Abram's reaction? ** he believed
-- How did the Lord regard Abram's belief? ** as righteousness
-- Then what did the Lord promise that evidently Abram found hard to believe, v. 7? ** that the Lord had brought him out of Ur in order to give him that land
-- What did Abram ask of the Lord then? ** a sign
-- After he'd asked for a sign, what was Abram told to do? ** prepare animals for a sacrifice
-- What happened to Abram after he prepared the animals? ** deep sleep and terrible darkness
-- Then Who spoke? ** the Lord
-- What did the Lord speak about first, v. 13-15? ** He gave prophesies about slavery and release and Abram's own peaceful end
-- When would his descendants come back to that land, v. 16? ** in the 4th generation
-- And what happened after these prophecies? ** the smoking furnace and burning lamp passed between the sacrifices
-- What else did the Lord prophesy about the land that He would give to Abram's descendants, v. 18? ** the borders of the land, from the Euphrates down to the river of Egypt

APPLICATIONS:

** We don't need to be afraid; God is can protect us.
** God has everything planned out for us, even if we don't know the plan.
** God has His own timetable, and since He is God, His timetable is better than ours.
** Belief is counted for righteousness.
** The earth (and everything else!) is the Lord's and He gives it to whomever He wants.
** We can trust the prophesies of the Bible to be fulfilled, because we can look back and see how so many of them have already been fulfilled.
** God understands our weaknesses.
** We don't need signs -- we have the fulfilled prophesies.
=== To me, all of these add up to our being content and at peace in the Lord.

Chapter 16: Hagar; Birth of Ishmael

-- What promise did Abram receive in the last chapter that he himself would see (15:4)? ** that he would have a son of his own

*-- Gen. 16:1 What do we know about Sarai? ** that she can't have children

--- What does Sarai have? ** an Egyptian handmaid named Hagar

--- Now, are we actually told that Sarai knew about this promise to Abram of a son of his own? ** no

--- But can you imagine Abram's not having told her? ** I can't!

=== But let's be a little careful about filling in the gaps when we really aren't told something.

*-- Gen. 16:2-3 Sarai probably knew that God had promised Abram a son, so how does it seem that she figures to help God out in His plan? ** by giving Abram another wife by whom he can have his promised son

--- What does Abram seem to think of Sarai's plan? ** we aren't really told, but at least he agreed to it

--- Who was the second wife that Sarai had for her husband? ** Hagar

--- Where was Hagar from? ** Egypt

--- When might they have obtained Hagar? ** when they were in Egypt during the famine shortly after they came to Canaan

=== We aren't specifically told that, though. So, again, let's not be dogmatic about something that the Bible is silent on.

--- How long was this after they had originally come into the land of Canaan? ** 10 years later

--- How old was Abram when the Lord called him in Haran to go to Canaan? ** 75

--- So how old was Abram when he married Hagar? ** 85 years old

--- How would this plan of having Abram have children by Hagar give Sarai a child? ** if a woman's handmaid had a child by the woman's husband, then the child was considered to be the child of the woman herself

=== I've heard that this was even the case as late as the last century. A man from China would have a wife in China. He would move elsewhere to live and eventually take a second wife. And that was okay by their customs. And when that second wife had a child, the child would refer to the woman back in China as his mother in China.

*-- Gen. 16:4 Did Abram go along with this plan? ** yes

--- Did Hagar go along with this plan? ** yes

--- Are we told whether Hagar wanted to marry Abram? ** no

--- Do we know whether she jumped at the chance to marry the rich, influential master or whether she was repulsed by marrying such an older man? ** no, it just doesn't say

=== But she really had no choice, did she? She was a slave, and she had to do what she was told. But I would think that she might consider it prestigious to be married to the head of a community. Though we really aren't told how Hagar felt about it, so we need to be careful.

--- Was Hagar barren as her mistress Sarai was? ** no; Hagar got pregnant

--- After Hagar got pregnant, what happened? ** Hagar despised Sarai

--- Why might this have been? ** Hagar was then in a superior position to her mistress in a manner of speaking; Hagar could do something very important that Sarai couldn't do -- give Abram an heir of his own "blood"

=== When we can do something that we consider important that someone else can't do, we have a tendency to look down on the person who can't do it, to feel superior to them. Also, in this case, Hagar was a slave, and she could now feel superior to her mistress.

*-- Gen. 16:5 Was Sarai aware of how Hagar was feeling? ** yes

--- Who does Sarai blame for Hagar's insolence? ** Abram

--- Who does Sarai call on to judge between her and Abram? ** God

--- I can't really figure out why she blames Abram; any ideas? **

=== I wonder if she just doesn't want to take any blame herself or if she figures that Abram should keep Hagar in line or just what. Of course, Sarai may well have felt jealousy, even though the pregnancy was something she wanted. But we aren't given the details, so we need to be careful.

*-- Gen. 16:6 How does Abram get himself out of trouble with Sarai? ** he tells Sarai to do what she wants to about it with Hagar

--- So what does Sarai do about this? ** Sarai really cracks down on the pregnant Hagar

--- Do we have any indication whether Abram interfered in this management of the household? ** we aren't told anything about what (if anything) Abram said about it; we're just told that he had told Sarai to take care of it herself

--- Now, I know that speculation is dangerous, but what kind of "harshness" might Sarai have used; do you think Sarai beat Hagar severely with a club or threw her around a lot? ** my guess would be that it was more of a mental and verbal harshness and humiliating her rather than severe physical harshness

--- Why do I say that? ** because the whole idea was to get a child "for" Sarai, so Sarai isn't going to endanger the pregnancy

--- Anyway, how does Hagar react to this harsh treatment? ** she runs away

*-- Gen. 16:7 Where does Hagar go? ** into the wilderness on the way to Shur

=== Shur is a wilderness south-west of Canaan. I wonder if she were trying to get home to Egypt. But we aren't told.

--- Where does she stop? ** at a fountain in the desert.

--- Who finds her there? ** the angel of the Lord

=== Often when it says "the angel of the Lord" is means the pre-incarnate Jesus. Also, later in this chapter this "angel" says, "I will do such and such." So it seems to me that this is the second Person of the Godhead. We will see this more clearly toward the end of the chapter.

*-- Gen. 16:8 Does the angel of the Lord call Hagar by name? ** yes

--- But also what title for her does the angel of the Lord use when speaking to her? ** "Sarai's maid" or "slave"

=== According to Strong's the word for "maid" means "a female slave as a member of the household"

--- Why might He have addressed her in this way? ** perhaps as a reminder of her position in life, that she was a slave

--- What does the angel of the Lord ask Hagar? ** where'd she come from and where was she going

--- Do you think he already knew this? ** yes

--- Then why would he ask? ** for the same reason God had asked Adam in the Garden what he'd done and had later asked Cain about the death Abel! It makes the person have to admit to a wrongdoing; or to make the person really stop and consider what he is doing

--- Where did she say she came from? ** she was running away from her mistress

--- And why had she run away from Sarai, her mistress? ** because Sarai had in some way "laid into" the insubordinate slave who was flaunting her pregnancy before her barren mistress

--- Where does Hagar say she is going? ** she doesn't

=== As we said earlier, though, Shur is a wilderness south-west of Canaan and would be on the way to Egypt. I wonder if she were trying to get home to Egypt. But, again, we aren't told.

*-- Gen. 16:9 Where does the angel of the Lord tell Hagar to go? ** back to Sarai

--- What does the angel tell Hagar to do there? ** to be submissive to Sarai, as a slave should be

=== You almost might say that the angel was telling Hagar to remember the social position that she had in life as a slave and to act accordingly.

*-- Gen. 16:10 What interesting prophecy does the angel of the Lord give to Hagar? ** that she will have so many descendants that they can't be counted

--- Who does the angel of the Lord say will do this? ** "I"

=== Which again might indicate that this was the Lord Himself, not just some angel, Who appeared to Hagar.

--- We aren't really told, but why might God have promised Hagar all of these descendants? ** I think it was not for the sake of Hagar, but for the sake of Abram

=== God had already promised Abram countless descendants, and I think this is part of the fulfillment of that promise.

=== Now let's go back to v. 9 just for a minute and do some thinking.

--- Can you think of any place in the Bible that justifies slavery as such? ** I can't

--- Can you think of any place in the Bible that might indicate that slavery wasn't intended as a natural position of people? ** to me, Philemon 15-17

=== Now we are told that we are slaves to either God or the world, but that is in a different sense than a man's being slave to another man, isn't it. Let's just digress for a moment here, though.

*-- Eph. 6:5-8 Is Hagar's case the only place in the Bible where God seems to say that slaves should be good slaves and not men who are "as good as anyone else" and who should stand up for their rights? ** no, the Bible, though not justifying slavery tells any slave that if he is in that position to work well as a slave

=== The Bible doesn't tell masters to free their slaves, but it does tell them to be good to their slaves and to remember that they themselves have a Master in heaven.

--- Can you think of any examples in the Bible of people who were slaves and who worked well as slaves for their masters? ** Joseph, Daniel, Shadrach etc., Naaman's wife's girl slave

=== Well, enough digression, let's go back to Hagar. The angel of the Lord is talking to Hagar.

*-- Gen. 16:11 They couldn't do sonograms in those days, but does Hagar know the sex of her child before it is born? ** yes

--- How does she find out? ** the angel of the Lord tells her

--- What will it be, a son or daughter? ** a son

--- Who names the baby that Hagar is going to have? ** the angel of the Lord

--- What is to be the baby's name? ** Ishmael

--- Why? ** because God had heard about Hagar's mistreatment

--- Does anyone have a note telling us what "Ishmael" means? ** "God hears"

=== By the way, this is the first recorded time in the Bible that a baby is named by God before he is born.

*-- Gen. 16:12 Now also, after telling Hagar about the future that was quite a ways off (it would take a while to have countless descendants!), what 3 other things does the angel of the Lord tell Hagar about the baby that she is carrying? ** (1) again that she's going to have a male child, (2) that he will be a "wild donkey" of a man ("wild"), and (3) apparently he's not going to get along with other people, including, it seems, his relatives

--- What might a "wild donkey" or "wild" indicate about the kind of man that Ishmael is going to be? ** to me it seems to mean a stubborn, independent, rather undisciplined person, perhaps like a cowboy

=== By the way, the word translated "to the east" in the NAS or "in the presence" in the KJ literally means "before" or "in the presence" or "in the face". It might be said to have to do with the direction in relation to his relatives that he will live (east of them), or it might mean like in opposition to them, not get along with them. Sort of "in your face..." Though they descendants of Ishmael did live east of the land of Canaan where the Jews would be. So this could have a double meaning. We need to be careful, though.

--- Which people in the world today are descended from Ishmael? ** the Arabs

--- Are they a bunch of disciplined, cooperating people who get along well with everyone? ** no!

--- Who are the relatives of the Arabs? ** other Arabs and the Jews

--- Do the various Arab countries all get along with each other? ** no

--- Do they get along with the Jews? ** no

*-- Gen. 16:13-14 Do we have any indication whether Hagar seemed to believe what God's angel told her, v. 13? ** yes, from the verse, she seems to have accepted the fact that it was indeed God who was talking to her

--- And Who does Hagar say spoke to her? ** the Lord

--- Now, how does the word "Lord" look like here? ** all capital letters

--- So what would be the actual Hebrew word used here? ** Jehovah

--- So Who actually spoke to Hagar, an angel or the God? ** God

--- By what interesting title does Hagar call this God who had seen her, intervened in her behalf, and talked with her? ** "You are a God who sees me"

--- We can't know for sure, but does that make you wonder anything about Hagar's religious beliefs? **

=== To me it sounds as if Hagar were used to various impersonal, local gods. And here she has run into a God who not only could, but did, see her, hear her, and actually take an interest in her. That would be something different than in a pagan world. Remember she was from Egypt with its many gods, and most pagan gods are mainly out for their own interests. But I wouldn't be dogmatic that she was an idolater.

--- How was this meeting between Hagar and a seeing, caring God remembered (v. 14)? ** by naming the well where Hagar had stopped "The well of the living One who sees me"

=== By the way, I had a footnote that said that simply the fact that Moses had to identify the place for whoever was going to read this, where this well was, shows that the original names were very old.

*-- Gen. 16:15 What had been the angel's advise to Hagar in v. 9? ** to go back to her mistress Sarai and be submissive to Sarai's authority

--- Does Hagar follow the angel's advice? ** it would seem so

=== Or at least she went back and seems to have behaved more wisely, because we have no more indication that Sarai was wanting to alienate her. Though we really aren't told.

--- How do we know she went back? ** it says she bare Abram a son

=== Usually it is a dangerous thing to "suppose" something, but in this case let's do a little of it anyway. Then we'll look a minute at the wisdom of trying to say things definitely when the Bible doesn't specifically say them.

--- Can we suppose that maybe Hagar told anyone about her experience with God's angel? ** yes

--- Why? ** because the baby was named "Ishmael" as God had said

--- Is there any way this could have happened if Hagar hadn't told anyone about the angel and what it said? ** yes, Abram could have said to himself, "God has heard my prayer all of these years for a son and has finally given me one", or even Abram could have let Hagar name the baby, though it says Abram called him that

=== So even here in this case we have to be careful about reading things into what the Bible doesn't say, don't we? The baby could have been "humanly" named "Ishmael" either way, couldn't he? Hagar could have told what that the angel of the Lord had told her and how God had named the baby, or Abram could have just figured his prayer had been heard at last, or even he could have let Hagar name him. Or Hagar could have told Abram that the angel of the Lord had said that the baby's name was to be Ishmael. We aren't given the details, though. But Moses knew the incident and wrote it down, so I think Hagar told Abram. Also, if she had told about the whole incident, it would have explained her having come back.

*-- Gen. 16:16 How old was Abram when Ishmael was born? ** 86 years

--- And how old had we said he was when he married Hagar? ** 85

--- So had it taken Hagar very long to get pregnant? ** no!

--- And how many years had Abram been in the land of Canaan? ** 86 - 75 = 11 years

CHART

REVIEW:

-- What promise had Abram received in Chapter 15 that has a direct bearing on this chapter? ** that he would have a son of his own as an heir

-- Who decided that God needed help with His plan? ** Sarai

-- What did Sarai propose to do to help God with His plan? ** give Abram another wife who would have a child in her name for Abram

-- What wife did Sarai have in mind? ** her handmaid Hagar

-- Where was Hagar from? ** Egypt

-- Did Abram go along with the plan? ** yes

-- What did Hagar do after she got pregnant? ** became insubordinant to her mistress Sarai

-- What did Hagar do after being punished by Sarai for her insubordination? ** ran away

-- Who found Hagar? ** the angel of the Lord

-- What did the angel of the Lord tell Hagar about her descendants? ** would be so numerous they couldn't be counted

-- What 3 things did the angel tell Hagar about this particular pregnancy? ** he would be (1) a son, (2) wild man, and (3) wouldn't get along with people or relatives

-- What did the angel tell Hagar to do? ** to go back and be a good slave

-- How old was Abram when Ishmael was born? ** 86

APPLICATIONS:

** Don't be too quick to "help" God with His plans, especially if it seems more ethical without our "help".

** Be content in the situation where God places us.

** Work hard "as to God" in whatever position God has placed us.

** Be encouraged, knowing that God can and does work things out well for those who love Him and are in His will.

** God is compassionate.

** God was compassionate toward Hagar, how much more toward us, His children.

Chapter 17: Isaac Promised

=== Abram has a son now by Hagar. He believes that he finally has the heir that God promised him. But man's plans aren't always God's plans -- and God's plans are the correct plans.

*-- Gen. 17:1 How old is Abram now? ** 99 years

--- How many years have elapsed since the end of chapter 16? ** 13

--- So, of course, how old is Ishmael now? ** 13 years

--- Who again comes and talks to Abram when he is 99 years old? ** God

--- How does God identify Himself? ** as the Almighty God

--- Why might the Lord have identified Himself in this manner? ** I think it might again be to assure Abram that He is the real God, not just some local "god"

=== Remember, Canaan was full of idolatry and local false "gods."

=== Also, if someone is talking to you, you want to know his identity.

*-- Gen. 17:2 The Lord says He's going to do two things; what is the first one? ** make a covenant

--- Between Himself and whom? ** between Himself and Abram

--- And what is the second thing the Lord says He will do? ** give Abram lots of descendants

--- Let's emphasize that; just a few descendants? ** no, "multiply him exceedingly", lots

--- Has Abram ever been told that before? ** yes, several times

*-- Gen. 17:3-4 Did God appear to Abram in a dream? ** it doesn't seem that way to me

--- Why do I say this? ** because Abram fell on his face

=== We aren't told whether Abram could actually see Someone or whether he just heard the voice. But it sounds to me as if Abram is awake.

--- What does God tell Abram about his descendants besides the fact that he will have lots of descendants? ** that many nations will be descended from Abram

--- What is the difference there between lots of descendants and many nations? ** there could be one very multitudinous nation, but here there's going to be lots of nations with lots of members in them

--- What big nations can we think of today that are descended from Abram? ** the Jews and all of the various Arabs

*-- Gen. 17:5 What does the Lord do to Abram here? ** changes his name from Abram to Abraham

--- Why does the Lord say He's doing this? ** because Abram will be a father of many nations

--- Do you have a footnote in your Bible that tells what "Abraham" means? ** "father of a great multitude" or "father of many nations"

=== Whereas "Abram" only means "high father" "or exalted or mighty father". There is a difference there, isn't there?

--- What promise does God repeat that He had already told him twice before (Gen. 12:2, 13:16)? ** that He will give Abram lots of descendants

*-- Gen. 17:6 Now the Lord again repeats 2 parts of the promise here in the first phrase of this verse; what is the first repetition? ** that he will be exceedingly fruitful, that is, have lots of descendants

--- Then the Lord adds another repetition; what is that? ** that he will be the father not only of a great nation (Gen. 12) but of many nations

=== Again, there's a difference there between just one great nation or many nations, isn't there? But God seems to be making a point of it.

--- But then God adds something that is different from the promise in Gen. 12:2; what is this new thing? ** that kings will be descended from him

--- Why is that second part different than before? ** lots of people can have many, many descendants, but that doesn't mean that they will be kings

=== So Abraham will not only have lots and lots of descendants, but some of them will be very important people as well, royalty.

*-- Gen. 17:7 What, again, does the Lord repeat that He is going to do in the first part of the verse? ** establish His covenant between Himself and Abraham and Abraham's descendants

--- Will this covenant just be with certain generations of Abraham's descendants? ** no, throughout their generations

--- And how long will this covenant last? ** forever; it's everlasting

--- So does that sound as if we Gentile Christians will replace Abraham's blood descendants? ** not to me!!

*-- Gen. 17:8 What is this part of the promise about? ** the land of Canaan

--- What is the Lord going to do with this land? ** give it to Abraham and his descendants

--- Is this a new promise? ** no

--- How much of the land of Canaan? ** all of it

--- Again, to whom will the Lord give it? ** to both Abraham and his descendants

--- How long will they have it? ** everlastingly, forever

--- Did Abraham personally get the land in his lifetime? ** no

--- So, as we've discussed before, when does that seem to indicate? ** to me it says that Abraham will personally receive it sometime in the future

--- When would that be? ** after the return of Christ

--- So, again, as we've discussed in earlier lessons, what can we figure would have to happen to Abraham in order for him to receive this land in the future? ** he'd have to be resurrected

=== Which is another sign to us that there will be a resurrection.

--- At the end of the verse, what wonderful promise does God give, a promise better than all of the others? ** that He will be their God

--- Again, whose God? ** Abraham's descendants' God

=== This is the 4th time that God has made a promise to Abraham. Each promise is worded just a little differently. Next week we are going to take a look at the 4 promises and compare them. So we aren't going to do any comparisons now.

*-- Gen. 17:9-11 In chapter 15, which was at least 14 years earlier, when God gave a covenant, Abram had asked for a sign; what sign had the Lord given him then? ** God had him divide the animals for the sacrifice and then at dark a burning lamp and a smoking furnace had passed between them

--- And that time, Who was being held responsible to keep that covenant? ** the Lord Himself

--- Was Abraham held responsible for doing anything at all at that time? ** no

--- Now this time does Abraham ask for a sign? ** no

--- But is there going to be a sign? ** yes

--- Who initiates the idea of a sign? ** God

=== So this time when God makes the covenant, He volunteers a sign to remind Abraham and his descendants of the covenant. And this will be a more permanent sign and one visible to more than just Abraham like the other sign had been that Abraham had asked for.

--- What is the sign this time? ** circumcision

--- Who had done the acting in the first sign in chapter 15? ** God

--- And who is to do the acting in this token? ** Abraham and his descendants

--- Specifically, which of Abraham's descendants are to keep this sign? ** all of his male descendants

=== No mutilation of girls here as some people do! And this won't really mutilate the boys.

--- How long are they to keep this sign of this covenant? ** throughout their generations

--- Do the Jews still circumcise their baby boys today? ** yes

--- For that matter, do the Arabs still circumcise their boys? ** yes

--- Now, again, the last sign was one that held God to the covenant; in this sign, who is held to do something? ** Abraham and his descendants

--- And what is this to remind them of? ** that God would be their God and give them the land of Canaan forever

*-- Gen. 17:12-14 Who were Abraham and his descendants to circumcise? ** all males in the household, whether child, master, or slave, whether born in the household or bought

--- At what age was a male to be circumcised? ** 8 days old

--- What was to happen to anyone who was not circumcised? ** he was to be "cut off", which seems to mean "killed"

--- Why? ** because he would have broken the covenant of God

--- And again, how long were they to do this, end of v. 13? ** it's an everlasting covenant, so, again, "throughout their generations"

=== I wouldn't want to be dogmatic about it, but it would seem to me that a Jew would still be obliged to circumcise his sons on the 8th day.

--- But, from what we see in the book of Galatians and Acts 15, do Gentile Christians need to be circumcised? ** no

--- So would it seem that the mostly Gentile church will replace the Jews in these promises of the land? ** not to me

=== I know there are those who would disagree with me, but I believe that God will literally keep His promise to Abraham, and that this promise is still to the Jews. We'll get into it in a minute whether this includes the Arabs.

*-- Gen. 17:15-16 What did God do regarding Sarai at this time? ** changed her name to "Sarah"

--- Does God give any reason for this change? ** not that I can see

--- Do you have a footnote that says what "Sarah" means? ** "princess"

=== I couldn't quite figure out what "Sarai" had meant. The concordance said it meant "Dominative" and had come from a word that meant some sort of leader. But I'm not sure.

=== Naming a person is sometimes seen as a sign of ownership; perhaps that has something to do with this name change of both Abraham and Sarah, but I don't know.

--- What startling gift does God say He will give to Sarah? ** a son

--- Who will be the father of Sarah's son? ** Abraham

=== "...give thee a son of her..."

--- Will Sarah also have very many descendants? ** yes

--- And what about those descendants? ** they will be both nations and kings

--- And will the Lord bless Sarah as well as Abraham? ** yes

*-- Gen. 17:17 What is Abraham's first reaction to God's promise? ** he fell down and laughed

--- Does he seem to have believed God? ** no

--- Does he seem to have expressed his doubts to God? ** no, he said it to himself

--- Why does he seem not to have believed God? ** he seems to have thought that both he and Sarah were too old to have children

--- How old were Abraham and Sarah at this time, according to this verse? ** 100 and 90

--- But hadn't we just gotten through saying he was 99? ** yes

--- So have we finally found a contradiction in the Bible? ** no, he's just rounding the numbers off, just as we often do

--- But if the baby is born in a year, how old would they be then? ** 100 and 90

--- But hadn't Abraham believed 13 years before when promised a son? ** yes

--- And what had that belief been considered by God? ** as righteousness

--- So has Abraham lost his faith, his salvation, here? ** no

=== We know we can't lose our salvation, but we sometimes forget and doubt the promises of God, don't we.

--- Of course, this is 13 years later, which can make a difference, but why else might this have been hard for Abraham to believe? ** a man can have children at an older age than a woman, and Sarah was way beyond childbearing years

*-- Gen. 17:18 Had Abraham evidently thought that the idea of his having an heir had been already taken care of? ** yes

--- How? ** through Ishmael

--- So how did Abraham seem to think that God's promise could easily be kept? ** through Ishmael

--- From the wording of v. 18, what would you say might have been Abraham's feelings toward Ishmael? ** it sounds as if Abraham had put his love and his earthly hopes on Ishmael and that he doesn't want to see Ishmael denied the promises that God had given to Abram

=== This seems to have been Abraham's first inkling that God didn't plan to fulfill His promises through Ishmael. What a disappointment this must have been to Abraham as he first thought about it.

--- How old was Ishmael now? ** 13 years

=== So Abraham has had 13 years to love Ishmael and make his plans around him. Think how very much he must have loved him, and now here Ishmael's going to be cast aside as far as the promises of God! Also, he knows that Ishmael had grown up thinking he was the child of promise and total heir of Abraham, and that is going to be taken away from him now. His long awaited, loved son is going to be sorely disappointed here.

*-- Gen. 17:19 What seemingly impossible thing does God repeat to Abraham? ** that Sarah will give a son to Abraham

--- What will this son's name be? ** Isaac

--- Who named Isaac? ** God

--- Who had named Ishmael back in Gen. 16:11? ** God

--- What does "Isaac" mean? ** "laughter" or "he laughs"

--- We aren't told why the promised son was to be named "laughter", but do you have any thoughts? ** perhaps because Abraham had laughed in disbelief when God told him this; it would always be a reminder to Abraham that God really does do miraculous things and keeps His promises; or it just might be because Isaac would bring joy and laughter in their lives; or a combination of reason!

=== But we aren't told the reason for the name, so we need to be careful not to state it dogmatically.

--- God has already made a covenant with Abraham and his seed; with whom does God now say He will make a covenant? ** with Isaac and his seed

--- What time limit does God put on the covenant that He will make with Isaac? ** He doesn't; it's to be an everlasting covenant

*-- Gen. 17:20 Has God entirely forgotten Ishmael? ** no

--- What does God say He will do for Ishmael? ** bless him, give him many descendants including 12 princes, and also make a great nation out of him

=== I wouldn't be dogmatic about it, but I think that the 12 princes are his sons, not just descendants. Over in Gen. 25:12-16 it gives the names of the 12 sons of Ishmael and calls them "12 princes."

--- And why, according to this verse, is God doing this? ** because He had heard Abraham's cry about Ishmael, his son

*-- Gen. 17:21-22 When was the first time that Abraham had first been promised that he would have children? ** when he was first told to go to the land of Canaan

--- And how many years was that before this time here? ** at least 24 years (99 - 75 = 24)

=== But 13 years before this time here Abraham had figured he finally had the child of promise, but now the Lord tells him that Ishmael is not that child of promise.

--- And how much longer will he have to wait for the child of promise? ** 1 year

--- God really wants to get His point across; with whom does He again say that He will make His covenant instead of with Ishmael? ** Isaac, the promised son of Sarah

--- So, again, is God promising to be the God of Ishmael and to give Ishmael's descendants the land of Canaan forever? ** no

--- Who has the promise? ** Isaac

--- But who has had the land of Canaan the most during history, the Jews or the Arabs? ** the Arabs

--- So what about the promise to the Jews? ** they will have the land forever in the future

=== God doesn't renege on His promises! The Arabs may have something now, but man's history is very short compared to eternity.

--- And then what did the Lord do? ** left Abraham

*-- Gen. 17:23 Did Abraham obey God's command concerning circumcision? ** yes

--- How long did Abraham wait to carry out God's command regarding circumcision? ** he didn't wait; he did it that day

--- How well did Abraham carry out God's command? ** to the letter

--- Who all were circumcised that day? ** every male in Abraham's household: Abraham, Ishmael, and all slaves who had been born with Abraham or whom Abraham had bought

--- Does this seem to show that Abraham believed God, that He would keep His promises? ** yes

=== Otherwise, why would Abraham have bothered with this painful operation! You can imagine the squirming around as men and boys waited their turn! I hope he had Ishmael done as one of the first, not only as a example to the others but so that he didn't have to anticipate it!

*-- Gen. 17:24-27 How old was Abraham when he was circumcised? ** 99

--- And how old was Ishmael when he was circumcised? ** 13

--- Were they circumcised on different days? ** no, on the same day

=== It sounds to me as if they had a busy day that day!

--- How many trained soldiers did Abraham have? ** 318

=== Plus boys, old men and those who weren't soldiers!

--- Was it only those servants who had been born in his house that were circumcised, v. 27? ** no, even those whom he had bought

--- Now we just mentioned that the Arabs still circumcise their boys; at what age do they do it? ** at 13 years old!

--- Why? ** because that was how old Ishmael was when he was circumcised

--- But at what age had God told Abraham to circumcise the sons? ** at 8 days

--- So which are really obeying God's command in the way they circumcise their sons, the Arabs or the Jews? ** the Jews

--- And which is more merciful, the Jews' way or the Arabs' way? ** the Jews' ways
=== Rather, we should call that God's way!
--- And what can the Jews remember as they are having their baby boys circumcised? ** that God has promised to be their God and to give them the land of Canaan forever
--- Do you think God will break this promise? ** no!
=== So someday the Jews will own the land of Canaan forever.
--- Do they own it now? ** no
--- When will that be? ** after the return of Christ
CHART

REVIEW:

-- How old is Abraham now in this chapter? ** 99 yrs
-- How old is Ishmael now? ** 13 yrs
-- How old would Sarah be now? ** 89 yrs
-- What did God do with names? ** changed Abraham and Sarah
-- In this chapter God renews His covenant with Abraham and then gives Abraham a token of the covenant; what is the token? ** circumcision
-- After all of the males have been circumcised, when will new males of the household be circumcised? ** either at 8 days of age or when they are obtained
-- What made Abraham laugh? ** that Sarah would have a baby
-- What about Ishmael? ** He's not the son of promise, but God will bless him and make a great nation of him anyway.
-- Who keeps the covenant, the descendants of Isaac or the descendants of Ishmael? ** Isaac's

APPLICATIONS:

** Again, our plans aren't always God's plans.
** God does have plans for us, even if we don't see all of the details.
** With God anything is possible.
** We should remember and believe God's promises.
** We should be quick to obey God's commands.

God's 4 Covenants with Abraham Compared

(You can either go ahead and make the chart as I have in this lesson, or you can just show the people the already made chart at the end of this lesson and just go over it with them. The chart is also in the Teacher Helps.)

=== Now let's make a chart comparing the 4 covenants that God made with Abraham. These appear in GENESIS 12, GENESIS 13, GENESIS 15, and GENESIS 17. We will divide each of these 4 covenants up into sections.

1. The OCCASION or circumstances under which the covenant is given.
2. The AGE Abraham was when God made the covenant with him.
3. And what the covenant is about. CONCERNING This last will also be divided into 3 sections:
    - a. promises concerning the Land
    - b. promises concerning Abraham's Descendants
    - c. promises that concerned Abraham himself Personally

=== Most of the 4 covenants will contain something in each of these sections, but there are a couple of places where we won't have anything to fill in. In those cases we'll just draw a line when we come to them. Naturally, our entries will have to be brief, since we have so little room in which to write.

=== Let's start with Genesis 12:

*-- Gen. 11:31-32-Gen. 12:1 Acts 7:2-4 What is the occasion of this first covenant? ** God is calling Abram to leave Haran and go to a land that He will show him

--- For the sake of the chart, what was the name of that land? ** Canaan

LEAVE HARAN FOR CANAAN

*-- Gen. 12:4 How old was Abraham when he left Haran as God had told him? ** 75 yrs

*-- Gen. 12:1 This is a repeat, I know, but what does God say about the land in this verse? ** only that God will show Abram where the land is

=== He evidently doesn't know the name of it or where it is at the time that God spoke to him.

1. GO TO LAND GOD SHOWS

*-- Gen. 12:5-7 This may seem not quite cricket, because God says this a little after the first part of this covenant, but I'm going to include this part of the promise here under this first covenant, because this is all that God says at this time.

--- Where is Abram when God speaks to him now? ** in Canaan

--- What does God tell Abram concerning the land? ** that He will give it to Abram's seed

draw a little line to separate, then 2. LAND TO BE GIVEN TO SEED

*-- Gen. 12:2 What does God say about descendants of Abram in this verse? ** that Abram will become a great nation

1. ABRAM BECOME GREAT NATION

=== God has promised the land to Abram's descendants and that they'll become a great nation. Now let's see what of a personal nature God says to Abram.

*-- Gen. 12:2 I have listed 3 things of a personal nature in this verse that God says to Abram; what do you come up with? **

1. GOD BLESSES ABRAM
2. ABRAM'S NAME GREAT
3. ABRAM BE BLESSING

*-- Gen. 12:3 Can you find 3 more things of a personal nature in this verse that God promises

Abram? Of course, we know that they also apply to Abram's descendants, but I don't think that Abram could have known this for certain, so I'm putting them under "personal". **

4. ALL WORLD BLESSED IN ABRAHAM
5. GOD BLESSES THOSE WHO BLESS ABRAM.
6. GOD CURSES THOSE WHO CURSE ABRAM.

=== Now let's go on to the second covenant:

*-- Gen. 13:14a What is the occasion at which this covenant was given? **

PARTS WITH LOT

--- Do we have any indication of Abram's age? ** no; but he had to be 75+

*-- Gen. 13:14-15 What does God tell Abram about the land here? I have 3 things

1. WILL GET ALL LAND SEEN
2. LAND TO ABRAM, SEED FOREVER
3. GO EXPLORE YOUR LAND

=== I realize that exploring the land isn't really part of a promise, but Abram was told to explore on this occasion, so to help us remember which covenant was which, I'm including it here.

=== We're going to wait until we're all finished with the chart before we go back and make comparisons in the different promises in the different covenants.

*-- Gen. 13:16 What is Abram told about his descendants in this verse?

1. SEED AS DUST, SO MANY

--- Do any of you see anything that could be taken as of a personal nature here? ** I don't

=== So let's go on to the third covenant, which is found in Gen. 15.:

*-- Gen. 15:17 What of a very different nature is going to happen here? ** the divided sacrifice with the burning lamp and oven going between it

=== I can find no special occasion under which God made this covenant (though just the giving of the covenant was a special event). So I decided to use DIVIDED SACRIFICE as a memory aid as to which this is. I hope that is all right will all of you.

=== Let's wait for a minute to put an age for Abraham. Instead, let's see what God says about the land.

*-- Gen 15:7 What does God say about the land in this verse? ** Only that He is the 1. SAME GOD AS IN UR WHO BROUGHT ABRAM HERE TO GIVE HIM THIS LAND

*-- Gen. 15:18 What does God say here about the land? ** That God would give Abram's

2. SEED GET LAND FROM RIVER OF EGYPT TO EUPHRATES

=== We're going to compare these covenants when we finish. Let's just fill them in now.

*-- Gen. 15:4 What does God tell Abram here about descendants? **

1. ABRAM WILL HAVE A SON

*-- Gen. 15:5 What else does God say about descendants in this verse? **

2. SEED AS STARS, SO MANY

*-- Gen. 15:13-14 What all does God tell Abram about his seed in these verses? **

3. SEED:
    - -- STRANGERS IN LAND
    - -- SERVE THEM
    - -- AFFLICTED
    - -- 400 YRS.
    - -- THAT NATION JUDGED
    - -- LEAVE RICH

*-- Gen. 15:16 And what else is Abram told about his descendants? **

COME HERE AGAIN IN 4TH GENERATION

*-- Gen. 15:1 What personal thing does God tell Abram? **

1. GOD IS ABRAM'S SHIELD and REWARD

*-- Gen. 15:15 What else is Abram told about himself personally? **

2. ABRAM WILL DIE IN PEACE

3. ABRAM LIVE LONG TIME

=== Now we want to fill in Abraham's age.

--- Look at Chapter 16. What event happens in this chapter? ** marries Hagar and birth of Ishmael

*-- Gen. 16:16 And how old is Abram when Ishmael is born? ** 86

--- So can we make a stab at perhaps how old Abram was in chapter 15? ** @ 85 YRS.??

=== Now for the fourth covenant.

--- In Chapter 17 are we given any reason or occasion for the covenant? ** no

*-- Gen. 17:1 How old is Abram at the time of this 4th covenant? ** 99 YRS.

*-- Gen. 17:8 What does God tell Abram about the land? **

1. WILL GIVE CANAAN TO ABRAM and SEED FOREVER

*-- Gen. 17:2 What does God say here about Abram's descendants? **

1. ABRAM MULTIPLIED GREATLY

*-- Gen. 17:5 What does this say about Abram's descendants? **

2. FATHER OF MANY NATIONS

*-- Gen. 17:6 What else about descendants? **

3. HAVE NATIONS and KINGS

**- Gen. 17:19 What 3 things does God tell Abram about his descendants here? **

4. SON BY SARAH

5. NAME SON "ISAAC"

6. COVENANT WITH ABRAM and ISAAC, and SEED FOREVER

*-- Gen. 17:21 Does Abram finally find out when he will get this son through whom all of God's promises will be fulfilled? **

(4) NEXT YEAR

*-- Gen. 17:8 What wonderful thing does God tell Abram in the last part of this verse? **

7. WILL BE GOD TO ABRAM and SEED FOREVER

*-- Gen. 17:20 Does God entirely forget Ishmael? ** no

8. ISHMAEL:

-- WILL ALSO BE BLESSED

-- MANY DESCENDANTS

-- 12 PRINCES

-- GREAT NATION

=== Let's see if there is any personal message to Abram this time.

*-- Gen. 17:1 How must Abram behave before God? ** 1. ABRAM MUST BE UPRIGHT BEFORE GOD

*-- Gen. 17:10 What else personal? ** 2. GOD INSTITUTES CIRCUMCISION

*-- Gen. 17:5 What about his name? ** 3. ABRAM NOW ABRAHAM

*-- Gen. 17:15 How about Abram's wife? ** 4. SARAI NOW SARAH

*-- Gen. 17:16 What else about Abram's wife that we were already told? **

-- MOTHER OF NATIONS

-- MOTHER OF KINGS

Comparing the 4 Covenants

=== Some of the things we study may seem far removed from us, but remember, Sunday School is (1) to help us get a background so that we can better understand the sermons we hear, and (2) so that we can better apply the sermons and also our lessons to our own lives. So nothing is "wasted time" in Bible study. Remember II Timothy 3:16, "ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable..."

=== God made 4 covenants with Abraham at various times in Abraham's life. These involved the land that God was going to give to Abraham and his descendants. They also had personal promises. Now that we have listed what is in each covenant, let's look at them and see if they are all the same, all entirely different, a connection between them, or just what. This has always been confusing to me, even though I've marked each covenant with a bracket and number in my Bible. So let's see if we can take some of the confusion out of it -- at least for me!

--- Over how many years are these covenants given? ** 24 years

--- Where was Abraham at the time of the covenants? ** the first in Haran (though in the second part of "Land" he was in Canaan), the rest in Canaan

=== First, let's look at and compare the parts concerning the land in each of the covenants.

--- 1st Covenant, Gen. 12: What does God tell Abram concerning the land as He tells Abram to leave Haran? ** (1) Go to the land God will show him, and after he gets there (2) the land is to be given to Abram's seed

--- 2nd Covenant, Gen. 13: Are there any additional facts given to Abram about the land after Abram and Lot part? ** yes, (1) the land to be given to him by God was all of the land that Abram could see around him in all directions, (2) not only would it be given to Abram's seed, but it would be theirs forever, and (3) he was told to go out and explore it

--- 3rd Covenant, Gen. 15: Anything new said about the land? ** yes, (1) he's told the boundaries of the land his seed would receive, not just the vague statement that it would be all he could see, and (2 God told him that the reason that God brought him there was to give him the land

--- 4th Covenant, Gen. 17: Anything new said about the land? ** no

=== Next, let's look at the promises about Abraham's descendants.

--- At the time of the first 3 covenants did Abraham have any descendants? ** no

--- But first, could you say that just from the promises about the land whether Abram would know if he would ever have any children? ** yes, they all refer to his descendants' inheriting the land

--- 1st Covenant: What is Abram told about his descendants? ** they would become a great nation.

--- 2nd Covenant: As well as being great that we know from the first covenant, are we told anything new about Abram's descendants? ** yes, they would be very numerous, like dust

=== This really is new information, since the word for great means mighty, so a nation could conceivably be a great nation but still be a fairly small nation.

--- 3rd Covenant: Any old information repeated? ** yes, again told that his descendants would be numerous, like stars

--- Now, up to this point, do the promises given about the land and descendants sound like real promises or just figurative promises or spiritualizations? ** to me they all sound real

--- Anything new here in the 3rd Covenant that Abram learns about his descendants? ** yes. (1) the still childless Abram learns that he will have a son. (I wonder if he were beginning to think that his numerous seed would be from an adopted son, not a blood son.) They will (2) live in a land that isn't theirs, (3) be at least servants, if not slaves, (4) be mistreated, (5) something about 400 years, (6) the nation that mistreats them will be judged by God,, (7) they will leave this land, (8) they will be rich when they leave, and (9) they will be back in Canaan within 4 generations of leaving it.

=== These sound like pretty explicit details to me! Nothing figurative that I can see.

--- 4th Covenant: Anything here that is sort of a repeat of the other promises? ** yes, that he will be "multiplied greatly"

--- Anything new about descendants here? ** yes, (1) many nations, (2) descendants will be kings as well as nations, (3) Sarah will have a son, (4) named Isaac, (5) covenant will be not only with Abram but also with Isaac and seed and forever, (6) God will be their God forever, (7) also there are promises to Ishmael

--- But who's going to be the "child of promise", Ishmael or Isaac? ** Isaac

--- How old was Ishmael at this time? ** 13 years old

=== Let's look at the personal promises to Abram:

--- 1st Covenant: What of a personal nature (or what Abram might take to be of a personal nature) does God tell Abram as He tells him to leave Haran for the land God will show him (remember, even though we know that some this applies to Abram's descendants, he didn't necessarily know it while in Haran)? ** (1) God said that He would bless Abram, (2) and make Abram's name great, (3) that Abram would be a blessing, (4) all of the world would be blessed through Abram, (5) God would bless those who blessed Abram, and (6) God would curse those who cursed Abram

--- 2nd Covenant: What of a personal nature does God say at the time that Lot and Abram parted company? ** nothing; God just talked about the land and lots of descendants

--- 3rd Covenant: Anything new of a personal nature in this one at the time of the divided sacrifice? ** yes, God told Abram that (1) God would protect him and be his reward, (2) Abram would have a long life, and (3) die in peace

--- 4th Covenant: Anything new of a personal nature this time? ** yes, (1) Abram is told to walk uprightly before God, (2) the token of circumcision is given, (3) Abram's name is changed to Abraham, (4) Abraham's wife Sarai's name is changed to Sarah, and (5) Abram is told that his wife Sarah also comes under the promises of her descendants being nations and kings

=== I think that we might call these 4 Covenants that God made with Abraham "progressive revelations", don't you? First God just blessed Abraham and told him that he would become a nation and that God is going to give to this nation the land that God has shown him. Secondly, God enlarges just a little on this, not much new though. Thirdly, God enlarged even more and gave some actual details about the nation that Abraham will become, and promised him a long life. Then 24 years after the first Covenant, God filled in even more details, promised many nations, and even gave a lasting sign in circumcision, so that at the birth of each new baby boy Abraham's descendants would be reminded of these promises that God had given to their ancestor Abraham.

=== Now let's just for a minute look at one little detail. Back here in the 1st Covenant as God told Abraham to leave Haran, God promised him that Abraham would become a great nation. Then 24 years later in this last Covenant, God told Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. I know we've discussed this before, but let's do it again.

--- Do any of you have an interesting thoughts on that? ** Now, I may be wrong, but what struck me as I charted this last week was this. If Abraham were to have a son, he would figure that that son would grow into a great nation, wouldn't he? Well, for 3 of the covenants he had no son, did he? But God didn't tell Abraham all of the story, did He? A year after the 3rd Covenant, Ishmael was born, and here, I think, in Abraham's mind was the father of the great nation that he, Abraham, was to become; also God had told Hagar that her son would have numberless descendants, remember. So, I was wondering if perhaps in Abraham's mind it was all settled with Ishmael. Anyway, 13 years later here God tells Abraham that the elderly Sarah is going to have a son who will be the child of promise, not Ishmael. And God Changes Abram's name to Abraham and tells him that he will be the father of many nations. So, Ishmael will become a nation, and Isaac will become a nation. And we know that a good 40 years later after Sarah dies, Abraham marries Keturah and has 6 more sons by her. So there are more nations. I don't know if each of them became a nation, but at least one of them Midian, did. Also, there will later be the other son of Isaac, Esau who will have descendants.

=== Now all of that is just some of my musings, but we can see that Abraham did indeed become the father of many nations. I find it interesting that he wasn't told that until after he had the promise of 2 sons.

APPLICATIONS:

** God has a plan for us, even if we don't know any or all of it.

** God's plans come to pass.

** Sometimes God will reveal His plan to us through the prophecies in the Bible, but that doesn't mean that we know all of His plan.

** Again, God's timing isn't always our timing -- but His is the right one.

** God's plans may take time.

** The world is the Lord's, and he gives it to whomsoever He wills.

** God can protect us.

CHART: COMPARISON OF GOD'S COVENANTS WITH ABRAHAM

	Genesis 12	Genesis 13	Genesis 15	Genesis 17
Occasion:	Leave Haran for Canaan	Parts with Lot	Divided Sacrifice	---
Age:	75 years	---	@85 years	99 years
Concerning:				
Land:	1) go to land God shows 2) Land to be given to seed	1) Will get all land he can see 2) Land to Abram & his seed forever 3) Go explore your land	1) Same God as in Ur who brought Abram here to give him this land 2) Seed get land from River of Egypt to Euphrates	1) Will give Cannan to Abram & seed forever
Descendants:	1) Abram become great nation	1) Seed as dust, so many	1) Abram will have son 2) Seed as stars, so many 3) Seed: - strangers in land - serve them - afflicted - 400 years - that nation judged - leave rich - come here again in 4th generation	1) Abram multiplied greatly 2) Father of many nations 3) Have nations & kings 4) Son by Sarah next year 5) Name son "Isaac" 6) Covenant with Abram & Isaac & seed forever 7) Will be God to Abram & seed forever 8) Ishmael: - will also be blessed - many descendants - 12 princes - great nation
Personal:	1) God blesses Abram 2) Abram's name great 3) Abram be blessing 4) All world blessed in Abram 5) God blesses those who bless Abram 6) God curses those who curse Abram	---	1) God is Abram's shield & reward 2) Abram will die in peace 3) Abram will live long time	1) Abram must be upright before God 2) God institutes circumcision 3) Abram now Abraham 4) Sarai now Sarah - mother of nations - mother of kings

Chapter 18: Three "Men" Appear to Abraham and Sarah

This turned out to be a long lesson. I found a convenient stopping place in it to be right after v. 15. If you have to split this into 2 lessons, be sure to review before going on to the second part of the chapter.

-- What happened in Chapter 17? ** God made His 4th Covenant with Abraham

-- And what happened to Abram and Sarai's names at this time? ** they were changed to Abraham and Sarah

-- What are the 2 main things in this covenant? ** (1) Sarah will have Isaac, and (2) circumcision instituted

-- How old was Abraham at the time? ** 99 years

-- What did we notice as we compared the 4 covenants that the Lord made with Abraham? ** that they were sort of progressive, details being added

*-- Gen. 18:1 Who is the "him" in this verse in the NAS and KJ? ** Abraham

=== The NIV fills in the name for us, doesn't it?

--- Where is Abraham living? ** the plains (or oaks) of Mamre

--- Remember, the plains (or oaks) of Mamre are in Hebron, but where is Hebron; is it in the hills, in the Jordan valley, where? ** in the hills just a few miles west of the Jordan valley

--- What time of the day is it? ** "in the heat" of it, which would probably mean in the middle of the day

--- What is Abraham doing? ** sitting in his tent door

--- What happened to Abraham as he's sitting there in the door of the tent in the heat of the day? ** the Lord appeared to him

--- Who do we know from this verse (though Abraham didn't at this time), who do we know that one of them is? ** the Lord

--- Which part of the Trinity would this be? ** God the Son

--- How do you know? ** "no man has seen the father" and the Holy Spirit is a spirit and, to my knowledge, was only seen as a dove at the time of Jesus' baptism

=== From the all-caps here, we can see that the word for "Lord" was "Jehovah."

*-- Gen. 18:2 What does Abraham do in the first part of this verse? ** looks up

--- What does he see as he looks up? ** 3 men standing near him

--- What does Abraham do when he sees these men? ** he runs to meet them and bows low before them

--- Why would he bow? ** that was common courtesy

*-- Gen. 18:3-4 In you own words, what friendly and polite greeting does Abraham give the 3 "men"? ** "If you like the way I look, please stop here."

--- What does Abraham call himself? ** their servant

--- Why did he call himself their servant? ** it was the polite thing to do

=== Within the last century people have often ended their letters "your obedient servant" and then signed their names. They weren't really saying they were the person's servant, it was just a polite way of talking.

--- What is the first thing that Abraham offered to do for these strangers? ** have water brought so they could wash their feet and then rest

--- We don't offer to have our guests' feet washed; why did Abraham do it? ** they walked the dusty, unpaved roads in sandals, so their feet would get dirty; then this would also refresh them and help them relax

--- Where did he say they could rest? ** under the tree

--- Why there? ** it would be cooler in the shade

=== Remember, it had said it was the "heat of the day."

=== Now, the KJ with its "thee's", "thou's", and "thy's" shows something I found interesting. Remember, those words are the second person singular and indicate just one person. Whereas, "you", "your", and "ye" are the second person plural, indicating more than one person. In English we've completely dropped the second person singular, but at least the Latin based languages still use it. I don't know about other languages. But the KJ translators purposely used this way in the KJ in order to be accurate, to show one person or more than one, even though the usage of "thee", etc. wasn't in common usage at the time of this translation. So someone with a KJ answer the next questions.

--- In v. 3 when he first greets them, does Abraham address himself to all 3 of the men? ** no, just to one

--- How do you know? ** "...thy sight...", "I pray thee...", "...thy servant..."

--- But then in v. 4, to whom is Abraham speaking, still just to the one man? ** no, to more than one

--- Again, how do you know? ** "...I pray you...", "...wash your feet...", "...rest yourselves..."

=== So it seems to me that Abraham recognized one man as the head of the group of three and first spoke to him when he first extended the invitation for them to stop there. Then he went on to say what he would do for the group. I don't think this really makes much difference, but it lets me picture the scene better in my mind.

*-- Gen. 18:5 What else did Abraham offer to do for the "men"? ** bring them some bread to eat

--- What would be the purpose of this food? ** so they could continue their journey even more refreshed and strengthened

--- According to the KJ, what polite way did Abraham have of entreating them to stay and eat? ** he told them that the purpose of their journey having taken them by his tent was so that he could help them rest and be filled before going on

--- Does he seem to have expected them to stay with him a long time? ** no; he seems to have expected them to continue on their journey after they were rested and had eaten

=== Acting as a sort of fast food restaurant for these travelers!

--- Did the "men" accept his invitation? ** yes

--- How many? ** at least more than one, "...they said..."

--- And someone with a KJ, was Abraham speaking in this verse to the leader of the little group or to all 3 of them? ** to all 3

--- How do you know? ** "...comfort ye your hearts...", "...ye shall pass on...", "...therefore are ye come to your servant."

*-- Gen. 18:6 Where was Sarah during all of this? ** inside the tent

--- Why might she not have come out and greeted the guests also? ** that probably wasn't the way things worked in that society

=== The women probably kept a pretty low profile, probably a security measure that became custom. But I'll bet she was listening and perhaps peeking out!

--- Who went to Sarah? ** Abraham

--- What did Abraham want Sarah to do? ** bake some bread for the men

--- What kind of flour was she to use? ** "fine" flour

=== My Bible dictionary says that fine flour was used later with sacrifices and was used by the poor as a sin offering. So this sounds like a better grade of flour and would be more of an honor to the guests.

--- Was Sarah going to bake loaves in the oven? ** no; fix like pan cakes or hoe cakes on some flat surface (hearth)

--- We aren't told, but why do you think she wasn't to bake them in an oven? ** that would take too long

--- How much flour did Abraham tell her to use? ** 3 "measures"

=== I don't know how much a "measure" is, but one of my Bibles has a footnote that says 3 measures would be about 20 quarts.

--- Now, Abraham had asked the men to stop and have a "morsel" or "piece" of bread; but does it sound as if Abraham wanted Sarah to fix just a "morsel" of bread for them? ** no! 3 measures is a lot of flour

=== When I use my bread machine and make one smallish loaf of bread, I use 3 cups of flour. We're talking the equivalent of 20 loaves or more of bread! That's a bunch of pancakes! Of course, he may have planned to give them some for their journey, too. We aren't told this, though.

--- Just as an aside, does this necessarily mean that Sarah did the cooking herself? ** not necessarily

--- Why do we say that? ** she had lots of slaves to do the actual work, but she would probably oversee it

*-- Gen. 18:7-8 According to v. 8, is Abraham going to give these strangers anything besides bread to eat? ** yes, veal, butter (or "curds"), and milk as well

--- Where did they get the meat? ** Abraham chose a calf and had it killed

--- Did Abraham choose just any old calf or just some crippled calf to give to his guests? ** no, a "tender and good" one.

--- Did Abraham take care of the butchering himself? ** no, he had one of his young male servants do it

--- Is this meal being fixed at a leisurely pace? ** no, Abraham ran to the herd, he had hurried to tell Sarah, and the young man quickly dressed the calf

--- Does this sound like just a quick meal that was whipped up in a few minutes? ** no, they had to kill the calf and butcher it and cook the meat, not to mention get all of those "hoe cakes" baked

--- But do you think they roasted the entire calf? ** I'd doubt it; I imagine, since this is being done quickly, that they cut out some choice pieces and cooked them quickly

=== I've read that often for a quick meal they'd cut small pieces, put them on a skewer of some type, and roast them over a fire. Shish-ke-bab.

--- Did Abraham join his guests at dinner? ** no, he stood by them as they ate

=== My guess is that this was good manners to be standing by to fetch them anything else that they needed, but I don't know.

=== Now let's think a moment. Usually when I picture this in my mind, I forget the 318 man army Abraham had and sort of see a little tent and an old man and an old woman and maybe a few animals scattered around.

--- But does this sound as if Abraham and Sarah were just camping out there in their little tent by themselves in the hills? ** no, this sounds more as if they were out on their ranch, so to speak

=== Remember, Abraham was rich. And here we see about his herds, and he had servants to do the work, though he oversaw it. I wouldn't be surprised if, as we said before, if Sarah didn't do the baking herself but had a servant do it. We aren't given the details, though. But this is a big ranch type of thing, not just a little camp.

*-- Gen. 18:9 What did the men ask Abraham as they were sitting there? ** where his wife was

--- These men were strangers, we find out later; but do they seem to have ever heard of Abraham before? ** yes, in that they knew Sarah's name

=== Of course, I think we might figure that Abraham was very well known in the area, so his wife's name might be well known, also.

--- Where did Abraham say Sarah was? ** in the tent

=== So she had been in the tent when the men first came up, and now, after at least overseeing the baking of the "cakes" she was back in the tent.

=== I don't know, but it seems to me that it would be a rather unusual thing for strangers to come by and ask about a man's wife.

*-- Gen. 18:10 Were the dinner guests sitting off quite a ways from the tent? ** no, evidently just in front of the tent

--- Why do you say this? ** Sarah could hear what they were saying

=== Maybe it wasn't socially acceptable (or safe!) for the women to come out and sit with the guests, but they did just as we would have, didn't they? They sat there out of sight and listened! Remember, this was probably sort of like our pioneer country or ranching country. Neighbors were probably widely scattered, and strangers were probably few and far between. A stranger meant something new to hear about.

--- Here these strangers are sitting and eating dinner; what unexpected pronouncement did one of the "men" make about Sarah? ** that Sarah would have a son.

--- The NIV fills in who the "he" of the KJ and NAS was; who was it? ** the Lord

=== But I think it was sort of fair for the NIV to fill that in, in that 3 verses later it says that it was the Lord speaking. But we'll look at that when we get there.

--- But in what strange way does the Lord say that Sarah will have a son? ** the KJ and others differ here, I think. The KJ indicates (at least to me) that the Lord would rejuvenate them ("return to them according to the time of life"), whereas the NAS and NIV makes it sound as if the Lord would come talk to them again at the same time the next year

=== I personally think the KJ has the correct slant here, but whichever it is, this birth will be a miracle.

--- But, interestingly, according to the KJ, is the Lord going to return to both of them or just to Abraham and how do you know? ** it says "...return to thee...", so He's going to be "returning" to Abraham

=== Again, does that mean to come back to him or to rejuvenate him? We don't have anything recorded that the Lord came and spoke to Abraham the next year, whereas we do have an old man suddenly able to sire children (and his barren old wife to bear a child). I don't think we should quibble over which is the correct interpretation here, but I think it's interesting to think about.

--- But who was in the tent listening to this startling announcement? ** Sarah

=== Now this will help us to figure out how old Abraham and Sarah are in this chapter.

--- How old were they in the chapter 17 (Gen. 17:1)? ** 99 and 89 yrs.

--- How do we know that there was 10 years difference in their ages? ** Gen. 17:17 says so

--- And how old were they when Isaac was born (Gen. 21:5) 100 and 90 years

--- So how old were Abraham and Sarah at the time of Chapter 18? ** still 99 and 89 years, because Sarah isn't pregnant yet

*-- Gen. 18:11-12 People still lived longer then than we do now; so were the ages of Abraham and Sarah considered still young at this time? ** no; the Bible calls them "old and well stricken in age".

--- What physical detail about Sarah is the Bible careful to mention as God is preparing for the birth of Isaac? ** the KJ seems to say that Sarah no longer had periods, but the NAS and NIV just say she was no longer of childbearing age; they both mean the same thing

=== But the fact that she was "well stricken with age" also shows that Isaac isn't going to be a "mid-life baby", doesn't it? There's going to be a miracle involved here.

--- What is Sarah's reaction to this statement of one of their dinner guest? ** incredulous laughter

--- Did she laugh out loud? ** no, inside herself

--- Should the birth of a son by Sarah have been news to Abraham? ** no, God had promised him one in the last chapter

--- Does it seem that perhaps Abraham hadn't told Sarah about that particular promise from God? ** to me it does, in that she seems so incredulous when she hears it now

=== But it could be that she hadn't believed it then and now that it's repeated, she still doesn't believe it. We aren't told when she first heard about this.

--- But who else besides Sarah seemed to have been past the age to have children, according to what Sarah says here? ** Abraham

*-- Gen. 18:13-14 Who do we find out that the man speaking is? ** God Himself

=== But we had known from v. 1 that He was one of the 3 visitors, hadn't we.

--- Does the Lord let Abraham know that He knows what is going on in the tent behind him? ** yes, He tells Abraham both what is being done and thought

--- Which were? ** Sarah had laughed to herself and said those words, evidently to herself

--- What does the Lord then repeat? ** that He would return to Abraham when He said and that Sarah would have a son

=== Again, the KJ sounds like a rejuvenation to me, but I wouldn't be dogmatic about it.

--- So the Lord repeats his promise, but in v. 14, what gentle scolding reminder does He have that we should always remember, too? ** "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

--- So does it seem that by this time that Abraham might be suspecting Who is guest is? ** it seems to me that he would at least have suspected they were angels, perhaps even the Lord, but we aren't told

*-- Gen. 18:15 What was Sarah's feelings at this time? ** fear

--- Why might she have been afraid? ** I'd be afraid, too, if someone came up and told me that some seemingly impossible thing was going to happen and then told me what I was thinking, wouldn't you!

=== The reaction in the Bible when people are visited by God or an angel is often intense fear.

--- What did Sarah do? ** lied, denied having laughed

--- Does it seem that Sarah is still talking to herself or what? ** it sounds to me as if she calls out from inside of the tent with this denial

=== That is a strictly human response in such a situation, I think, but it seems rather senseless to try to lie to someone who has just told you what you were doing and thinking behind His back!

--- Did Sarah's lie seem effective? ** no, she was called on her lie by the Lord, "No, but you did laugh"

*-- Gen. 18:16 What do these strange men or prophets or whatever Sarah and Abraham think they are do after eating and resting? ** get up

--- What would it seem they were going to do? ** start on their journey again

--- What direction do they head in? ** east toward Sodom

=== Remember, they're in Hebron in the hills, so they'd have to go east.

--- What does Abraham, as the polite host, do? ** accompanies them for a ways

=== Just as we do now, seeing our guests to the car.

*-- Gen. 18:17-19 Which of the 3 now speaks? ** the Lord Himself

--- Are we told whether the Lord is speaking within Himself or aloud to Abraham? ** no

=== My guess would be (and that's all it is, is a guess) is that He was talking to Abraham.

--- Had God come down only to visit with Abraham, or do we know now that he must have had another reason? ** must have had another reason, "that thing which I do"

--- Which of the 4 Covenants that God made with Abraham does God now quote? ** the first

--- Why does God say that He's going to tell Abraham what He is about to do? ** because He has promised to make Abraham into a great nation, all nations will be blessed in Abraham

--- How does God say that Abraham will raise his children? ** to do the ways of the Lord

--- And how, in general, will Abraham's descendants act, according to this verse? ** justly and fairly

--- And what will be the result of these characteristics? ** God will be able to fulfill His promises to Abraham

--- What do you think that means? ** of course, first it means that God always fulfills His promises, but I think it also means that God doesn't bless the wicked, so Abraham's descendants will be, on the average, more godly than those around them; otherwise, God wouldn't be wanting to heap blessings on them

--- Now, from all of this, through which of Abraham's "household after him" will these promises be kept, all of them or what? ** Isaac's descendants

=== God just seems to ignore the other 7 sons that Abraham will have in total.

--- But to whom had the promises been, Gen. 17:21? ** to Isaac

*-- Gen. 18:20-21 God had in chap. 17 already told Abraham about Sarah's going to have a son, so that might not have rated a special visit to tell Sarah herself, but now we find out another reason for God's having come in person to that region; what is it? ** to "see" whether Sodom and Gomorrah are really as wicked as He has been told

--- Did the Lord really have to leave Heaven to know this? ** no, He is All-Knowing

--- Then why might the Lord have actually come to earth to "see" about this? ** to me, it seems as if the Lord want to "call the shots" on what He is going to do, so that Abraham will know the power of God to fulfill His promises and also, looking ahead, this will give Abraham a chance to bargain for mercy for the wicked

*-- Gen. 18:22 Who was it who had been talking with Abraham? ** the Lord

--- What is the scenario now? ** two of the men are walking away toward Sodom; the main one, the one who had done the talking, the Lord, is still standing there with Abraham

=== So we have a picture of the scene here.

*-- Gen. 18:23-25 From v. 25, does Abraham seem to realize with Whom he is talking? ** yes

--- What does Abraham called the Lord in v. 25?** the Judge of all the earth

--- From these verses, does Abraham seem to know what God means by saying that He's going to go see if the cry of Sodom is really true? ** yes

--- What does it mean? ** that God is going to destroy Sodom

--- What is Abraham trying to do in these verses? ** bargain for the sparing of the city of Sodom

--- What argument does Abraham use? ** (1) that is would be wrong to kill the righteous with the wicked, and (2) since God is God, He can't do wrong

--- Does that seem pretty presumptuous of Abraham to talk to the Judge of all the earth like that? ** to me it does!

=== But we try to do the same kind of thing sometimes in our prayers, don't we? We try to "bargain" with God. "Oh, if You will only do such and such, I'll ...."

=== It seems to me that Abraham is arguing by using God's character against Him!

--- What does Abraham ask God to do, v. 24? ** spare Sodom if there are 50 righteous men in it

At this point I started a little chart showing the numbers as we went along, but you certainly don't have to! I'll show at the end of this lesson what I did, but I'm not even going to include it in the Teacher Helps.

*-- Gen. 18:26 What is God's reaction to this presumption on Abraham's part? ** He just seems to quietly agree

--- By the way, where would these 50 righteous be? ** in Sodom

--- But what had the Lord spoken about back in v. 20? ** Sodom and Gomorrah

--- Why might be a special reason why Abraham is interested in the sparing of Sodom? ** his nephew Lot lives there

--- What is it the Lord says He will do if there are 50 righteous? ** spare all of Sodom

=== All right, this is Abraham's request. Let's as we go along, see how many times Abraham gets up enough nerve to try to bring the number down!

*-- Gen. 18:27-28 Did this, about 50 righteous, satisfy Abraham? ** no

--- Why might it not have satisfied Abraham? ** perhaps he himself had doubts how many righteous people were in Sodom!

--- What does Abraham ask for? ** spare Sodom if only 45 righteous

--- How much is that down from his original request? ** 5

--- What does the Lord say? ** OK

=== Notice it says "the city" and "it". So it sounds to me as if Abraham is bargaining for Sodom, and not paying much attention to Gomorrah.

--- Is Abraham wording this in a humble way? ** yes, "...I am but dust and ashes..."

=== So this is the 1st time the Abraham tries to amend his original presumptuous request of God, isn't it!?

*-- Gen. 18:29 What does Abraham try to bargain this time? ** for the sparing of the city if there are 40 righteous

--- How much from Abraham's last request? ** 5 more

--- And how much is this down from the original request? ** 10

--- And how does God take it? ** says all right

--- So how many times has Abraham tried to amend his original request? ** 2

*-- Gen. 18:30 Is Abraham through trying to bargain with the Lord? ** no

--- What does Abraham first ask of the Lord? ** that He not be angry

--- Why might the Lord be angry? ** here some mere man is trying to argue with the Lord and get Him to change His plans!

--- What does he ask for this time? ** 30 righteous

--- How many did Abraham bring the count down from his last request? ** 10

--- Is Abraham being polite all of this time? ** very!

--- What does the Lord say to this request? ** that He'll spare the city for 30 righteous

*-- Gen. 18:31 And this time how many righteous? ** 20 righteous

--- How many did he bring his request down from the previous request? ** down another 10!

--- And God's reply? ** OK

--- How many times has Abraham tried to amend his original request now? ** 4

*-- Gen. 18:32 Is Abraham through yet? ** no!

--- But what does he ask the Lord before making this final request? ** that the Lord not be angry with him

=== You can certainly see why he might expect the Lord to snap at him at this point!
--- What does he ask for this time? ** he actually has nerve enough to ask God to spare the city of Sodom if He can find only 10 righteous men in it!!
--- How much is this down from Abraham's last request? ** 10 more
--- How much is this down from the original request in v. 24? ** 40!
--- How does God take this? ** again He says okay
--- And how many times has Abraham tried to amend his original request now? ** 5
=== Talk about nerve!!!! So it's been 50, then 45, 40, 30, 20, and now 10! And if only 10 righteous men can be found in the whole city of Sodom, the Lord will spare it.
--- And in each case, why would the Lord then spare the city? ** because of those few righteous people
*-- Gen. 18:33 Is Abraham through now? ** yes
=== I guess even Abraham could see how ridiculous this was becoming!
--- Did the Lord stay and talk a while longer with Abraham when Abraham was finally through trying to bargain? ** no
--- What did the Lord do? ** He left right away
--- Though, actually, who was the last one to speak? ** God
--- What did Abraham do then? ** went back to the vicinity of his tent

CHART

How many time Abraham changed his original request!
50
(1) 45
(2) 40
(3) 30
(4) 20
(5) 10

REVIEW:

-- After what event does this chapter take place? ** after God had appeared to him and promised him Isaac by Sarah and instituted circumcision
-- How old are Abraham and Sarah now? ** 99 and 89
-- Where does this take place? ** in Hebron
-- What is Abraham doing in the beginning of the chapter? ** resting in his tent door during the hot part of the day
-- Who comes to Abraham? ** 3 "men"
-- What does he entreat them to do? ** to stop, rest, and have something to eat before going on
-- What does he fix (or have fixed) for them to eat? ** meat, bread, butter, and milk
-- What do they tell him? ** that Sarah will have a son
-- Where was Sarah ** in the tent listening
-- What is her reaction to the men? ** she laughs in disbelief
-- As the 3 men go on their way, who does one of them turn out to be? ** the Lord
-- Do all 3 stop and talk to Abraham? ** no, 2 go on
-- Toward where? ** Sodom
-- What does the Lord tell Abraham now? ** that He is going down to see if all the bad things that He's heard about Sodom and Gomorrah are true

-- What does Abraham do about this? ** tries to bargain with God not to destroy Sodom and almost chides God that God is righteous and wouldn't want to destroy the righteous with the wicked

-- At what number of possible righteous does Abraham start out? ** 50

-- What number does he end up with? ** 10

APPLICATIONS:

** Anything is possible with God.

** "Be careful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13:2)

** Hospitality is important.

** The Lord is merciful.

** The Lord has His own plans and will carry them out.

** God sees wickedness and judges it.

** God hears the cry of those mistreated.

** We should pray for others (intercessory prayer).

** Perhaps the Lord will spare our city or country if there are enough righteous in it, so we should be righteous.

Chapter 19: Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

=== Last week we had 3 "men" (actually the Lord and 2 angels) come eat dinner at Abraham's. As they prepare to leave, the Lord has told Abraham that he is going to destroy Sodom for its wickedness, and Abraham "talked the Lord down" to sparing the city if there were only 10 righteous men in it.

*-- Gen. 19:1 We had been up in the hills with Abraham and the Lord; now where has the scene shifted to? ** down in the Jordan valley to Sodom

--- What time of day had it been back in 18:1 when the Lord and the 2 angels had appeared to Abraham? ** "the heat of the day", probably noon or a little a while after noon

--- But what time of day is it now? ** evening

--- And who now enters the city of Sodom in the evening? ** 2 angels

=== Perhaps it had taken the rest of the afternoon for them to walk to Sodom; we aren't told. Of course, this doesn't come right out and say that it's the same day, but it certainly sounds like it to me. But let's not quibble over that. It's evening.

--- How many people had visited Abraham? ** 3

--- When they were leaving, what did each of these visitors seem to do, 18:22? ** 2 went on toward Sodom, but the third, the Lord, had stayed and talked to Abraham

--- And what had the Lord done after talking with Abraham, 18:30? ** "left"

=== I don't know where the Lord went when He left, but some people think that 1 angel and the Lord came to Sodom (from later in the chapter), but it seems to me that only the 2 angels themselves went to Sodom. But I'm not about to argue with anyone who says otherwise, though it does say "angels" here. Okay, so the Bible says that two angels came to Sodom.

--- Who was sitting at the gate? ** Lot

--- What might be inferred by the words "sitting at the gate"? ** often men of importance sat at the gate; it's where often the business of the city was done. So perhaps Lot was an important man in the city. We can't say for sure.

--- By the way, how is it that Lot is living here in the plains of Jordan? ** he had chosen the lush grass here for his herds when his and Abraham's herdsmen had argued about the lack of enough pasture land for both of them

*-- Gen. 19:2 What did Lot want the men to do? ** come spend the night at his home

--- Does it sound as if he expected them to stay several days? ** no, they could get up early and go on their way

--- What little detail did he add to this that Abraham had also said to the 3 "men" who came to him? ** about washing their feet

--- How did the two angels accept Lot's offer of hospitality? ** declined, saying they'd spend the night outside instead

*-- Gen. 19:3 Did Lot just let it go at that? ** no, he continued urging them to come with him

--- Did they continue declining? ** no, they finally went with him

--- How did Lot treat these strangers? ** very well; fixed a feast

--- What kind of bread did he serve them? ** unleavened

--- Perhaps why might that have been? ** very likely it was fixed after the angels went to his house, and that would be the quickest way to fix it

=== Like baking biscuits instead of yeast bread. Much quicker!

*-- Gen. 19:4 Who all came to Lot's house later on that evening? ** the men from all parts of Sodom

--- Just men in a certain age group? ** no, of all ages

--- Did they just come to the front door? ** no, they surrounded the house

*-- Gen. 19:5 Did these men just knock at the door and talk? ** no, it sounds like they stood outside and shouted

--- To whom did the men call out? ** Lot

--- What did they ask Lot? ** where the men were who had come there to his house

--- What did they say they want Lot to do? ** to bring the strangers out to the crowd

--- For what purpose? **

=== The actual Hebrew word used is "to know" them. If that's all we had, we might think that they just wanted to get acquainted with these strangers who had come to town. But from what comes later we can see that it boils down to that they want to rape them.

--- So do you think it was obvious that these 2 "men" were actually angels? ** no!

=== I can't imagine anyone with enough nerve to demand to rape an angel!!

=== Now, let's just take a quick aside here. Often we think of or hear people condemn Lot for living in wicked Sodom. We sometimes hear him really run down. But let's look at the best commentary of the Old Testament. Of course, I'm facetiously referring to the New Testament! We'll start a verse early to get the context.

*-- II Pet. 2:6-8 Was Lot evidently aware of the evil going on around him? ** yes

--- And what was his reaction to it? ** he was vexed by it, really bothered, distressed

--- Was he only occasionally aware of it and bothered by it? ** no, every day

--- But what does this call Lot here? ** just, righteous

--- So, from this can we think of another reason besides just hospitality that Lot might have had in mind in asking the strangers to come home with him? ** yes, perhaps he did it knowing they would probably be unsafe on the streets

--- Does this say, though, that Lot should have moved out of Sodom? ** no

--- On the other hand, does he say he should have stayed in Sodom? ** no

--- Does this verse in any way condemn Lot for having lived in Sodom? ** no

=== So I think many of us need to be a little careful about condemning people that the Bible calls righteous and fair. And we might consider that about us in California, now. Should we move out of San Diego County or out of California? Or should we stay here and try to straighten things out? I don't know. And I don't know what Lot should have done.

=== But back to Genesis. All the men of the town have surrounded Lot's house and are calling for him to bring out the 2 strangers so that they can rape them.

*-- Gen. 19:6 Did Lot just open the door and look out and talk to his neighbors? ** no, he went out and closed the door behind him

--- Why might he have done this? ** so that they wouldn't break into the house and grab the men, also he would be more likely to be able to reason with them this way, it seems to me

*-- Gen. 19:7-8 What does Lot call these men of Sodom? ** "brothers"

=== So he's trying to placate them as much as he can, isn't he?

--- What does Lot call the actions that the men of Sodom plan on? ** wicked

=== So we can see that Lot didn't think that they just wanted to make the acquaintance of the strangers, can't we? And this situation would be called an act against nature, wouldn't it? Something wicked.

--- So what solution does Lot offer? ** that the men rape his 2 virgin daughters instead!!

--- What reason does Lot give for this astounding (at least to us!) solution to the problem? ** that the men had come under the protection of his roof

=== As if his daughters hadn't! But I'm not going to go into what we think of his actions. Of course, we are absolutely appalled at this -- and I think with reason. But we must remember that in those days women were thought of as they still are in many parts of the world today as not being so important as men, not as they are thought of in our country or truly Christian parts of the world. Also, perhaps he figured that heterosexual rape was at least better than homosexual rape. But let's get our blood pressures down and go on!

*-- Gen. 19:9 Did these wicked men take Lot up on his offer? ** no

--- What did they tell him to do? ** to stand back

--- What did they intimate that Lot was in the first part of the verse? ** a foreigner

--- What did they say that Lot, this foreigner, was doing now? ** he was now placing himself as their judge

--- For what reason would they think Lot was making himself a judge of them? ** in that he didn't approve of what they had in mind

--- So what did they say they'd do to Lot? ** worse to him than they would have done to the 2 strangers

--- Were they just standing back and shouting? ** no, they were crowding up to Lot and were going to break down his door

*-- Gen. 19:10-11 How does Lot escape this dangerous situation? ** the angels reached out and grabbed him, pulled him in, and shut the door

--- Then what did the angels do to the evil men of Sodom? ** made them blind

--- Just a few of them? ** no all of them

--- Why? ** so that they couldn't find Lot's door to break it down

=== Some translations say that they were blinded so they couldn't find the door; others say that they were blinded so that they tired themselves out looking for the door. I'm inclined toward the second translation. If that is true, it means that the men were only blind as far as being able to find the door; the door was "invisible" to them. If a group of men were suddenly struck totally blind, I don't think they would even think about finding a door, but would be worried about their blindness.

*-- Gen. 19:12-13 The 2 visitors now reveal the purpose of their visit to Lot; what is it? ** to destroy Sodom

--- Who has told them to destroy it? ** the Lord

--- How is "Lord" written here? ** in all caps

--- And how was "Lord" written in the previous chapter when the Lord visited Abraham? ** in all caps

=== So Jehovah visited Abraham, and Jehovah told the angels to go and destroy Sodom.

--- In view of this does that sound as if the Lord is one of these two "men"? ** no, to me it sounds as if they are both angels

=== But that really isn't the purpose of this story, to see just exactly who the angels are, is it? So let's just drop that and go on.

--- Why are they to destroy Sodom? ** because of their great wickedness

--- In view of this, what do the angels tell Lot to do? ** to go get any family he has in the city and take them out of the city

--- Do the angels seem to know if Lot has other family there? ** they don't seem to, in that they ask him if he has any

=== However, this may just be a rhetorical question to get Lot to thinking; we aren't told.

*-- Gen. 19:14 Did Lot believe what the 2 strangers told him? ** yes

--- How do you know that? ** because he acted on it

--- Who did he go plead with? ** his sons-in-law

--- Do we have any way of knowing if these are husbands of other daughters of Lot or if they are just husbands-to-be of his 2 virgin daughters? ** not that I can figure out

=== Though the NAS says "who were to marry..." I think those words have been added. However, it could have been a quite binding betrothal. Again, we aren't given details.

--- But do we have any solid evidence that Lot either did or did not have other children than his 2 virgin daughters? ** no

=== Since we aren't really told anything, let's not speculate.

*-- Gen. 19:15-16 The next morning, do the angels stop and have a leisurely breakfast with Lot and his family? ** no, they tried to hurry Lot along

--- Were Lot and his family hurrying? ** no

--- How did Lot and his family get out of the city? ** the angels finally grabbed them by the hand and dragged them out!

--- Where did the angels take them? ** outside the city

--- How many people did they drag out? ** 4

=== One for each angel-hand!

--- Who were they? ** Lot, his wife, and his 2 virgin daughters

--- What is the reason given in v. 16 as to why the angels dragged them out? ** God was being merciful to Lot

--- Remember, what had II Peter called Lot? ** just and righteous

--- So how many righteous do we know that the Lord had found in Sodom? ** at least 1, Lot, but not more than 4

=== In the entire city!

*-- Gen. 19:17 After dragging them out of the city, who now speaks? ** one of the angels

--- What did one of the angels first tell them to do? ** to run for their lives

--- And what was the second thing he told them? ** not to look back

--- Did they know where to run to? ** yes

--- How did they know? ** the angel told them

--- Where were they to go? ** to the mountains (not stay on the Jordan plain)

--- What might happen if they didn't? ** they might be destroyed

--- So does this sound, at least at this point, as if there might be more than just the city of Sodom destroyed or endangered? ** perhaps, otherwise they could just go to a different part of the plain

*-- Gen. 19:18-20 Does Lot immediately start running? ** no

--- What does he do instead? ** he stops and argues with the angel about where he can go

=== Doesn't that sound very human!!!

--- What excuse does Lot give for not wanting to go to the mountains as he was told? ** that some disaster might overtake him there and he'd die in the mountains

--- Where does Lot want to go? ** to a town nearby

--- What does his reasoning seem to be regarding this town? ** it's such a little town

=== It seems to me that he seems to be saying that it's so little that surely God wouldn't bother with it to destroy it.

*-- Gen. 19:21-22 What does the angel say about Lot's proposal? ** okay, but hurry

--- Why did Lot need to hurry? ** the angel wouldn't be allowed to destroy the city until Lot was gone

=== I've wondered why the rush, but perhaps it was because they wanted to do it early while everyone was still inside the city. But we aren't told.

--- What does the angel say about the city? ** that it will be spared for Lot's sake.

--- What name was this city given? ** Zoar

--- Do you have a footnote that says what "Zoar" means? ** "little" or "small"
=== Remember, Lot had said that it was just a "little city."
*-- Gen. 19:23-25 We had said earlier that it was morning when the angels were hurrying Lot and the 3 others along to get them out of Sodom.
--- Here we see how early; when was it that they left? ** before sunrise
--- How do we know? ** because it says in v. 23 that the sun had risen by the time that Lot got to Zoar
--- What did God do then? ** had burning sulfur fall all over and destroy Sodom
=== Now, this could have been some supernatural rain of fire and brimstone from heaven itself, or perhaps it could have been that the Lord caused some sort of volcanic action. That isn't the point, though. The point is that the Lord caused this when He said He would.
--- Was Sodom the only city that was destroyed? ** no, also Gomorrah
--- What was destroyed besides these 2 cities themselves? ** all of the people, the plain, and the plants
*-- Gen. 19:26 What about Lot's wife? ** she looked back and became a pillar of salt
=== The NIV doesn't show this next detail, but 3 other translations that I consulted did.
--- Someone with a NAS or KJ, what position was Lot's wife in as they were running? ** she was behind Lot
--- Does that necessarily mean that she was purposely lagging behind? ** no
=== Some people try to say that she was not hurrying, but was lagging behind, but I don't think we can definitely say that from the information given. It could be that Lot was leading the way or could run faster. But she definitely looked back; that we are told. And as a woman, I can understand why she looked back. It's speculation of course, but she probably wondered just what was happening or was going to happen. Women are curious about things, but I think men might be more apt just to follow orders.
=== By the way, sailors will often call salt "Lot's wife." I think that's interesting.
=== Now verse 25 speaks of "those cities and all the plain", by which we might just figure Sodom and Gomorrah. But let's take a look at it. Do you remember back in Gen. 14 where Chedorlaomer and the other kings came from the east and swept down, conquering, and took Lot. Remember that it was 4 eastern kings against 5 kings from the Jordan plain area.
*-- Gen. 14:2 Which cities are mentioned here? ** Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Bela ("which is Zoar")
--- Where have we just heard of Zoar? ** it was the city ("just a small one!") that Lot went to instead of going to the mountains
=== So it sounds as if perhaps the name of Bela was changed to Zoar after this cataclysm.
=== So we know that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed from Gen. 19 and that Zoar was not destroyed. But what about Admah and Zeboim? It just says here "those cities and all of the plain"; that is anything over one city.
*-- Deut. 29:23 What do we learn here? ** that the expression in Gen. 19 "the cities and all of the plain" included also Admah and Zeboim
=== I don't consider this of vital importance at all, but it does let us have a clearer picture of the destruction in Gen. 19. Also, why Lot and his family weren't to stay in the plain. This wasn't something that was confined simply to a small section. It covered quite an area. Notice that Gen. 19:25 said that all of the valley or plain was overthrown.
--- But which cities had the Lord told Abraham about, 18:20? ** simply Sodom and Gomorrah
=== I'm not sure, but I presume that these were the larger cities. Of course, Abraham would be especially interested in Sodom because of his nephew Lot.

*-- Gen. 19:27 When does this take place? ** early in the morning

--- Though it doesn't say, specifically what morning can we figure this is? ** the morning that Sodom is destroyed

--- And when would this probably be in relation to when Abraham had tried to bargain with the Lord about not destroying Sodom? ** to me it seems like the next morning, but I wouldn't be dogmatic about it

--- So what did Abraham do that same morning? ** he went and looked over the Jordan plain

--- Where did he go in order to look? ** to the place where the Lord had spoken to him the day before

*-- Gen. 19:28 And what did he see? ** nothing but smoke

--- Just a little smoke? ** no, like from a furnace

=== It sounds as if the smoke is just rolling up

--- Why did Abraham happen to go look at that time? ** remember, in ch. 18, he had bargained with the Lord trying to save Sodom, and now he's looking to see if there had been the 10 righteous men that would save the city

=== So again this sounds like the very next morning. Though some might argue that Abraham would go look each morning.

--- What does Abraham know when he saw all of that smoke? ** that there hadn't been even 10 righteous men in Sodom

*-- Gen. 19:29 Now we are told just why God saved Lot; why was it? ** because God remembered Abraham

--- Are we told here if Abraham knew that his nephew was safe? ** no

=== So Lot is saved because of God's regard for Lot's Uncle Abraham. We aren't told whether Abraham knew that Lot was safe, whether Abraham eventually found out, or if he never found out. We just aren't told. Except for the next few verses that end ch. 19, we are told nothing more about Lot himself in the Bible (except for the few verses in II Peter), though his descendants appear frequently.

*-- Gen. 19:30 Where had the angels originally told Lot to go before the destruction of Sodom? ** to the mountains

--- Where had Lot asked to go? ** to Zoar, a "little city"

--- Had the angels agreed to let him go to Zoar? ** yes

--- Had he gone to Zoar? ** yes

--- So, in this verse 30, where does Lot end up living? ** in the mountains

=== Where he had originally been told to go!

--- Why did he go to the mountains? ** he was afraid to live in Zoar

--- Are we told why he was afraid? ** no

=== So, again, here are lots of things that we are not told! We don't know how long Lot was in Zoar. We don't know just why he was afraid (though we could make lots of speculations on it!). But we do know that he went to Zoar, left, and then went to live in the mountains as he'd originally been told to do.

--- What was his house like in the mountains? ** it was a cave

--- Was Lot by himself? ** no, his 2 daughters were with him

--- Where was his wife? ** back somewhere as a pillar of salt

*-- Gen. 19:31 Who is talking? ** the older daughter of Lot

--- What complaint does this older daughter make? ** that there is no one around for them to marry

*-- Gen. 19:32 According to this verse, why does this seem to be of special concern to her? **

there is no one to marry, therefore their father will have no one to carry on his line

--- Where does she say there is no one to marry? ** in all the earth

=== So I wonder how extensive she thought this destruction was, or if she thinks they're going to live forever in a cave, or just what she's thinking. But we aren't told.

--- So what plan does she come up with? ** that they make their father Lot drunk and then get pregnant by him

--- Did she have this plan just for herself? ** no, "we", for both herself and her younger sister

=== Now, we can easily condemn the morality of this plan, but remember where they evidently had grown up -- in Sodom! So they had probably been exposed to a lot of immorality of thought.

--- By the way, are we ever told how these 2 daughters felt about their father's offer to give them to the mob? ** no

--- Do we even know for sure whether they knew of the offer? ** no

=== Something else we could uselessly speculate on! But let's go on.

*-- Gen. 19:33 Did they carry out her plan? ** yes

--- Does it sound as if Lot were in the habit of getting drunk every night? ** no, it says they got their father to drink the wine, made him drink it, enticed him some way

=== Of course, from the state of mind he might have been in after all of this, that might not have been too hard to do! But we aren't told that, either, so we need to be careful. Also, I wonder where they got the wine!

--- When did they do this, get their father drunk? ** that very night

--- And who first committed incest with her father? ** the older girl

--- What did Lot think about it? ** he didn't know about it

--- Why not? ** he was too drunk

*-- Gen. 19:34-35 What do they do now? ** carry out the plan again with the younger daughter

--- When? ** the next night

--- What did Lot think this time? ** again, he didn't know

=== We could do all sorts of condemning of Lot right now. But remember, his daughters had purposely set out to make Lot drunk.

--- Why do you think they wanted Lot drunk? ** they knew that he wouldn't do such an immoral thing otherwise

*-- Gen. 19:36 What was the result of this deception of Lot's daughters? ** they both got pregnant

=== That, to me, sounds almost miraculous in itself! Both girls get pregnant after just one sexual encounter each.

--- Are we told Lot's reaction to the fact that his daughters were pregnant? ** no!

--- Are we told what the girls told their father about how they got pregnant? ** no

=== Lots of fascinating human interest details are omitted! But those details weren't the purpose of the story here.

*-- Gen. 19:37-38 What sex were their babies? ** they both had sons

--- What was the relationship of those babies to righteous Lot? ** they were both his sons and his grandsons!

--- What was the name of the son of the older daughter? ** Moab

=== This name sounds similar to a Hebrew word meaning "from father", but I don't know if they are actually connected.

--- What was the name of the son of the younger daughter? ** Ben-ammi

=== "Ben-ammi" means "son of my people".

--- From these verses, do we know whether these boys ever had descendants? ** yes, it says "....the father of Moabites...the father of the Ammonites"

=== So the younger daughter's son was the one we would call "Ammon."

--- I know this is jumping ahead of our story here, but as a rule, were these nations friends of the Jews? ** no

--- But can you think of a very famous descendant of either of these boys who was friendly to God's people? ** yes, of Moab. Ruth was a Moabitess, so therefore an ancestress of David and then of Jesus

CHART

REVIEW:

--- Who went to Sodom? ** the 2 angels who had had dinner with Abraham

--- Who insisted on their going home with him? ** Lot

--- What happened concerning the "men" that night? ** the men of Sodom wanted to rape the strangers

--- How did Lot try to stop them? ** offered his 2 virgin daughters instead

--- What made the mob leave Lot alone? ** the angels pulled him in and blinded the crowd as far as being able to find the door

--- Was Lot able to persuade his sons-in-law to go with him? ** no

--- In the morning, what did the angels do? ** finally grabbed Lot, wife, and 2 daughters by hand and dragged them out

--- What were they told to do? ** run to mountains and not look back

--- What did they do? ** Lot asked to go to little city instead and was allowed to

--- What about Lot's wife? ** she looked back and a became pillar of salt

--- What do we hear about Abraham in this chapter? ** he got up early in morning to see if there had been 10 righteous men in Sodom

--- How did he find out there had not been 10? ** he saw nothing but smoke

--- Did Lot and daughters stay in Zoar? ** no, eventually they went to the mountains

--- What plan did Lot's 2 daughters come up with and carry out? ** they got sons/grandsons for their father by getting him drunk and getting pregnant by him

--- What were these sons/grandsons of Lots named? ** Moab and Ben-ammi

APPLICATIONS:

** God keeps His word in punishing as well as in rewarding.

** God shows mercy to the righteous.

** Evil is eventually punished.

** This should teach sinners to fear God's wrath.

** When we are told by God to do something, we should be careful to do exactly what He said.

** God can protect us is He wants to.

** We something need to let go of something and "not look back."

** We should pray for our city, our state, and our nation.

** We should be careful who our friends are (not "citizens of Sodom"), as they will influence our thinking.

** We shouldn't make important decisions right after a catastrophe.

Chapter 20: Abimelech Takes Sarah

-- What promise had been given to both Abraham and Sarah that was to be fulfilled the next year? ** Sarah would have a son

-- Then what cataclysmic event occurred in the Jordan Valley? ** the destruction of Sodom and 3 other cities and the plain there

-- And who had been saved alive? ** Lot and his 2 daughters

-- Were we told whether Abraham knew of the safety of his nephew Lot? ** no

*-- Gen. 18:1 & 20:1 Where had Abraham been living? ** plains of Mamre (Hebron)

--- To where did he move? ** Gerar

=== I don't know if this has anything to do with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah or not.

=== Gerar was a Philistine city about 40 miles south-west of Hebron.

--- But why didn't Abraham just live in the land he owned; why go to the land the Philistines owned? ** he didn't own any land!

*-- Gen.20:2 What is the name of the king of Gerar? ** Abimelech

--- What story did Abraham tell Abimelech? ** that Sarah was his sister

--- Have we ever heard this story before from Abraham? ** Yes, back in Gen. 12, where the same the same thing happened in Egypt

--- What happened to Sarah? ** Abimelech took her

--- How old is Sarah at this time? ** 89 yrs old !!!

=== We'll get into the why's a little later.

*-- Gen 20:3 Who visited Abimelech one night? ** God

--- In what way did God visit him? ** in a dream

--- What did God tell him? ** that he was as good as dead because he'd taken another man's wife

*-- Gen. 20:4 Had the king had any sort of relations with Sarah? ** no

--- What does Abimelech apparently realized could happen to him? ** he might die because of this

--- Who else does he figure might die because of this also? ** the whole nation

=== I think this probably means that city of Gerar over which Abimelech was the ruler.

--- How does Abimelech describe his "nation"? ** as righteous

=== The NAS says "blameless" and the NIV says "innocent," but the word is actually "righteous."

--- What do you think that Abimelech means by this? ** that the nation hadn't known that Sarah was Abraham's wife; they were righteous or innocent in that area

*-- Gen. 20:5 How does Abimelech describe himself in this situation? ** as innocent, with integrity

--- What excuse does he give for having taken this visiting woman? ** that Abraham had said that she was his sister, and she had agreed

--- Had Abraham ever tried this ploy before? ** yes

--- When and under what circumstances? ** shortly after he first came to Canaan and the famine came, so he'd gone to Egypt

--- What might this teach us about the customs of that area at that time? ** evidently it was considered fair game to take any unmarried woman who came into the country

=== But let's think about it a minute.

--- The other time with Pharaoh, what had Abraham said about Sarah before telling her to say she was his sister, 12:11? ** that she was very beautiful

--- But does is seem likely to you that the now 89 year old Sarah was so drop-dead gorgeous that Abimelech couldn't resist her? ** it wouldn't seem so to me

--- Can you think of any reason then why Abimelech might have taken Sarah when she said she was Abraham's sister? ** perhaps to make a good political alliance

=== It could have been a sort of hostage situation too, to ensure good behaviour.

=== But that still doesn't explain to me, at least, why Abraham would have told her to say that.

*-- Gen. 20:6 What does God seem to think of Abimelech's clear conscience? ** He seems to be agreeing with Abimelech.

--- Why hadn't Abimelech had sexual relation with Sarah? ** God had prevented it

--- According to this verse, if Abimelech had had relations with Sarah, against whom would Abimelech have been sinning? ** against God

--- Can you think of anyone else in the Bible who did a terrible sin against someone and then confessed to God that he had sinned against God? ** David with Bathsheba

=== It seems that anything that we do against what God says is right, is not only a sin against the other person, but is especially a sin against God who said it was wrong in the first place.

=== But the fact that the Lord had to keep Abimelech from approaching Sarah at all makes it seem, at least to me, that she still, even at her advanced age, must have been beautiful to a degree. But we aren't given the details here, so we shouldn't spend too much time in speculation. The point of it is that Abimelech unknowingly took Abraham's wife, and God didn't approve of that.

--- And again, how is God communicating with Abimelech? ** in a dream

*-- Gen. 20:7 What does God say about Abraham here? ** that Abraham is a prophet

--- Had we known that before? ** not that I can remember

--- What does God tell Abimelech that Abimelech must do? ** give Sarah back to Abraham

--- What does God say that Abraham will do and why? ** he will pray for Abimelech so that Abimelech will live

--- And what does God say will happen to Abimelech if he doesn't give Sarah back to Abraham? ** Abimelech and all that he has will die

=== It might even sound as if the whole city would be wiped out. Back in v. 4, that seems to be what Abimelech has already inferred. He asks God there if God would kill a righteous nation.

*-- Gen. 20:8 Does Abimelech seem to believe that it was God who had been talking to him in the dream or just that he'd had indigestion? ** he seems to believe it's God

--- What makes you say that? ** because early the next morning he calls everyone together and tells them about it

--- What is the reaction of his staff? ** they're all very scared

*-- Gen. 20:9-10 Who does Abimelech talk to next? ** Abraham

--- Who does Abimelech blame for this event? ** Abraham

--- What does Abimelech seem to feel about a situation where a man's wife would be taken by the king of a country? ** that it would be a very big sin

--- In what interesting way does Abimelech word it when he asks Abraham why he lied? ** he asks what he, Abimelech, had done to make Abraham want to get him to sin like that

=== I find it interesting that Abimelech seems to think that it's all right to take any single woman who comes into the country, but that he seems to consider it a terrible thing to take a wife. Of course, he's scared for his life when he's talking, but God seemed to have said that Abimelech wouldn't have taken a wife of someone.

--- And then again what does he ask Abraham in v. 10? ** pretty much why he'd done it

*-- Gen. 20:11-13 What was Abraham's opinion of the people of Gerar, v. 11? ** that they were not God fearing people and would kill him for Sarah

=== Again, remember that this is when Sarah was 89 years old. This has led some people to say that this event didn't happen at this time, but I see no reason to think that it wasn't. This comes right after it tells about the destruction of Sodom, and everything else seems to be in chronological order, so why not this.

--- Abraham gives 2 justifications for his deception about Sarah; what is the first one? ** he figured that he'd be killed so that his wife could be taken

--- And the second? ** it's not really a lie -- she's his half sister

--- Does it seem possible that Abraham had used this ruse for the same reason more than just the 2 times we have recorded in Genesis? ** it is possible (though not definite), because he told her to say this wherever they went after leaving either Ur or Haran (it doesn't indicate which)

=== So they may have been doing this off and on for about 25 years, though we can't say for sure. But think about something a minute.

--- What had the Lord told Abraham back in 15:15? ** that he would live to a good old age and die in peace

--- So what should Abraham have realized? ** that he wouldn't be killed violently by someone who wanted his wife

=== I think this is easy for us to sit here comfortably and talk about, but Abraham was living this over the years. So let's not condemn him too easily!

*-- Gen. 20:14-15 Did Abimelech do as God had told him? ** yes

--- Which was? ** to give Sarah back to Abraham

--- What else did Abimelech give to Abraham? ** lots of wealth in the form of slaves, sheep, oxen

--- And what did Abimelech tell Abraham? ** to live anywhere in his land that he wanted to

--- How does this compare with how Pharaoh had treated Abraham at least 15 years earlier (12:19)? ** Abimelech gives presents and invites Abraham to go anywhere in the land that he wants to, whereas Pharaoh simply gave Abraham presents and then asked him to leave Egypt

--- Why did I say this other event had to have been at least 15 years earlier? ** because it was before both parting with Lot, before the 2nd and 3rd blessings, and before marrying Hagar and having Ishmael

--- And how old was Ishmael at this time? ** 13

=== We have no mention of Ishmael or Hagar here, but that isn't the important thing.

=== So Abimelech followed as God had warned him, giving Abraham not only his wife back but also many gifts

*-- Gen. 20:16 What else does Abimelech give Abraham in addition to the slaves and animals? ** 1,000 pieces of silver

=== The NIV says 1000 shekels, but that word isn't there. In Hebrew it simply says "1000 of silver." Whatever it was, it was a lot of money.

--- Whom did Abimelech tell that he was giving all of this money to Abraham? ** he told Sarah

--- Interestingly, what did Abimelech call Abraham? ** Sarah's brother

=== I can't help but wonder if that were sort of a sarcastic remark, "I'm giving your brother...", since she had said he was her brother.

--- But why did Abimelech give this money to Abraham? ** as a token to everyone of the vindication of Sarah, a way of clearing her name before everyone

=== I don't quite understand this, myself. But it seems that in giving this large amount of money to her husband, Abimelech is saying that nothing happened to Sarah. It seems to "show the world" that she is unsullied. The KJ uses the word that Sarah is "reproved" which sounds like she is scolded, but it means to "re-prove", to prove again, to vindicate.

*-- Gen. 20:17-18 What did Abraham do then? ** prayed for Abimelech

--- What was the result of this prayer? ** God healed them so that Abimelech's wife and women slaves were able to conceive and have children again

--- What does it say that God had done because of Sarah? ** closed up the wombs of all of Abimelech's household

=== This brings up some interesting speculation. Some people think that God had protected Sarah by making Abimelech impotent. But all we really know is what the Bible tells us. It would seem to me that this chapter might have taken place over a several month period, but I don't know.

CHART

REVIEW:

-- What event just precedes this chapter? ** destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

-- Where did Abraham go? ** to Gerar, in the land of the Philistines

-- What happened there to him? ** his wife, Sarah, was taken by the king, Abimelech

-- Was she harmed in any way? ** no, she was protected by God

-- Who took care of the situation? ** God

-- What was the final outcome? ** Sarah was given back to Abraham, Abimelech gave riches to Abraham, and Abimelech's women could once again get pregnant

APPLICATIONS:

** God can take care of us without our having to lie.

** We should remember that when we sin against a person, we are actually sinning against God.

** When we have sinned against someone, we should try to make up for it.

** We should remember the promises of God in times of trouble.

** We really shouldn't lie.

Chapter 21: Birth of Isaac; Expulsion of Ishmael; Oath with Abimelech

-- Do you remember where Abraham is now living? ** in Gerar in the land of the Philistines
-- And how old are Abraham and Sarah? ** 99 and 89 yrs
*-- Gen. 21:1-2 What does v. 1 remind us of 2 times? ** that God is faithful to fulfill his promises
--- What was the first promise? ** that He would "visit" (KJ) her
--- And what was the second promise? ** that she would conceive and bear a son
--- Was this just at any old time that she had this son? ** no, at the time that God had set
--- Was Abraham considered young at this time or in the prime of life? ** no, he was old
--- When had God promised this? ** back in chapter 17
--- How many times have we studied that God made covenants with Abraham? ** 4
--- Which covenant was this one where Abraham was promised a son by Sarah? ** the 4th
--- What memory aid do we have that makes this covenant memorable in our minds so that we can distinguish it from the other covenants? ** this is when circumcision was instituted
--- Do any of you remember this: From Gen. 17:21, how long ago (from this chapter) was that promise given? ** it was some time during the previous year
=== We aren't told the time of the year when the promise was given nor when it was to be fulfilled, so I don't think it necessarily means exactly 12 months later. It seems to me that if the promise were given in January of the 1st year, it could have been fulfilled as late as December of the 2nd year and still be within the "next year". So it seems to me that there could be anywhere from 9 months to just under 2 years between the giving and fulfilling of the promise of a son by Sarah, but I wouldn't be dogmatic about it.
--- And what events have happened between the time the promise was given and the time it was fulfilled? ** the destruction of the 4 cities of the Jordan plain and the deception with Abimelech and Sarah
=== Now, unfortunately, some people try to point out that the events with Abimelech happened between the time of the promise to Sarah and the birth of Isaac, and they try to say that Abimelech had been the father of Isaac.
--- But what had God promised in 17:16 and 19? ** that God would give Abraham a son by Sarah
--- And how about 18:10, 14, and 21? ** that God would "return" to him and Sarah would have a son, would bear him a son
--- What about 15:4; what had the Lord promised Abraham there? ** that his heir should come from himself
--- In fact, what does 20:4 and 6 say about this? ** that God had kept Abimelech from "coming near" her
=== So I think we can just throw out that idea of Abimelech's being the father of Isaac, considering it just another attempt by non-believers to discredit something in the Bible. I only brought it up because you may hear this idea, and you should have ammunition against it.
--- And how had the Lord explained this coming miracle, 18:14? ** by asking is anything were too hard for the Lord
--- So considering all of this, who does it sound would be the father of Sarah's son? ** Abraham
=== Now back to the story!
*-- Gen. 21:3 Who named this new baby? ** Abraham
--- What was this son named? ** Isaac
--- What does "Isaac" mean? ** "Laughter"

--- Who named Isaac? ** God (Gen. 17:19)

--- At what point in God's conversation there with Abraham had God named this son? ** after Abraham had fallen on his face and laughed when told that Sarah would have a son

--- Later, who else laughed when told of the promised son? ** Sarah

--- What were the circumstances of her hearing about the promise and laughing? ** she was listening in the tent as the 3 guests (the Lord and the 2 angels) were eating and talking to Abraham

=== These details in themselves are not important. What I'm trying to do is to have us get "the big picture", to make the story line "flow", to show that this is all one continuous "story" and not just a bunch of separate, unrelated stories. The chapter divisions are artificial and were put in at a much later date for our convenience. This is the story of the man Abraham's life, not isolated bedtime stories.

*-- Gen. 21:4-5 How old were Abraham and Sarah when the baby was born? ** 100 and 90

--- What does Abraham do to the baby Isaac? ** circumcises him when he is 8 days old

--- Why? ** because God had told him to circumcise all males born into the household when they were 8 days old.

=== Now doctors have found out that the blood coagulates better at 8 days of age than it does right at birth. Wasn't God smart to have known that!!

--- Who remembers for what reason God said He was commanding circumcision? (Gen. 17:11) ** as a token, a reminder, of the promises that God had made to Abraham

--- God had made various promises to Abraham; of which specific promises was circumcision to be a sign? ** (Gen 17:8) that (1) God could be a God to Abraham and his seed after him, and (2) that God would give to his seed all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession

*-- Gen. 21:6 The baby is named Isaac; what additional reason does his mother give for the name of "Laughter"? ** it sounds to me that she is laughing at the sheer joy of having the baby, and especially when she is so old and this had been seemingly impossible

--- Who else does she say will laugh with her? ** everyone who hears about it

--- Are they going to laugh at her, this old woman with a baby? ** no

--- Then how will they laugh? ** they'll laugh with her, probably because they are happy for her

--- Can any of you think of another old woman who had a baby and she and lots of other people were very happy about it? (Lk. 1:14) ** Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist

*-- Gen. 21:7 Was this miracle just confined to Sarah's being able to bear a child? ** no, she was also able to nurse it

--- And to whom does Sarah say she had borne this baby? ** to Abraham

--- And what age group was Abraham in at the time? ** old age

=== So again we see that this is a miracle.

*-- Gen. 21:8 What celebration does Abraham have later? ** a feast

--- For what reason? ** to celebrate the weaning of Isaac

--- Again, had the old Sarah been able to nurse her child herself, v. 7? ** yes

--- We can't know for sure, but what ideas do you have on the age of Isaac when he was weaned? ** he would have been well past infanthood; it was, and still is often, common to nurse a child well past his 3rd birthday.

=== And I'd be willing to bet that Sarah was in no hurry to wean this precious baby of her old age! It's only been within fairly recent history that babies are weaned at a few months of age. I nursed some of my babies 2 years and have known more than one modern mother who did for 3 years. In "primitive" societies I've heard of mothers nursing for 4 and 5 years. In fact, one of my Bibles had a footnote that said this would traditionally be around the 5th birthday.

So this party isn't when Isaac is only a few months old.

--- As an aside, where do we hear of any other baby in the Bible that has an event tied up with when it is weaned? ** Samuel; he was taken to live with Eli and to "serve the Lord" after he was weaned

=== You can be sure that he was "potty trained" before being taken up to live with this old man, too! But back to Isaac here.

*-- Gen. 21:9 Did Abraham have any other children at this time? ** yes

--- Who? ** Ishmael

--- How old was Ishmael when Isaac was born? ** 14

--- It doesn't come right out and say here but how do you think this birth of Isaac affected Ishmael? ** he had to have been jealous; after all, he'd been the apple of his father's eye and the heir apparent up until that time (or at least until the time of the promise of Isaac a year earlier)

=== And though we don't have Bible to base it on, we might consider the feelings of Hagar at this time, also.

--- How did Ishmael, at least on one occasion, treat his little half-brother? ** made fun of him, mocked him

=== That evidently wasn't just light-hearted teasing, because the New Testament (Gal.4:9) says Ishmael "persecuted" Isaac. One translation says Ishmael "laughed at" Isaac, however, the word can be "to laugh at either in merriment or scorn". At any rate, it wasn't friendly.

--- Now, I always thought this mocking was done at the party when Isaac was weaned, and some of the translations that are broken up into paragraphs put the 2 events together. But just from what we have in these verses, can we be 100% sure that the 2 (the party and the mocking) happened at the same time? ** no, though it seems reasonable

=== I don't think it makes a lot of difference in this case, but we have to be careful not to say that the Bible says a specific thing when it doesn't.

*-- Gen. 21:10-11 At any rate, what is Sarah's reaction to this conduct? ** she wants Ishmael thrown out

--- Who else does she want gotten rid of? ** Hagar

--- Had Hagar been accepted as a full fledged wife? ** no, she's still called a slave

--- And how does Sarah refer to Ishmael? ** as a slave's son

--- Why does she say she wants them thrown out? ** because no slave's son is going to inherit with her own son

--- Whose idea had it been to have Ishmael in the first place? ** Sarah's

--- When Sarah had suggested Abraham's having a child by Hagar, had she mentioned herself at all (Gen. 16:2)? ** yes, she'd said that she would obtain children by Hagar.

=== In other words, Hagar's children by Abraham would be her own children. She is here, in effect, disowning Ishmael. We aren't told anywhere what her feelings about Ishmael had been before Isaac was born. That would be interesting to know!

--- About how old is Ishmael at this time, just a cute little boy? ** no, he was 14 when Isaac was born, so he'd be in his late teens

=== So here Sarah sees her precious little fellow being teased (and not kindly teased) by what could be called a practically grown man!

--- As mothers, can we understand her feelings? ** I can!

--- Has Abraham, also, lost all interest in Ishmael? ** no; he still thinks of Ishmael as his son

=== Which, of course, he literally was.

*-- Gen. 21:12 Who speaks to Abraham now? ** God

--- Does God come out and condemn this sibling rivalry? ** no

--- Instead, what does God tell Abraham to do? ** to go along with what Sarah wants

--- And what had Sarah wanted? ** to get rid of Hagar and Ishmael

--- And what does it call Hagar here? ** Abraham's bondwoman or slave

=== Not "wife."

--- What reason does God give for this? ** because Isaac only is to be the heir

=== I find it interesting that we aren't told how God came into the picture. Had Abraham been praying about it or had God just stepped in? We aren't told, but it sounds like God just came into it on His own.

*-- Gen. 21:13 But has God forgotten Ishmael? ** no

--- What does God say He'll do about Ishmael? ** He'll make a nation out of Ishmael, also

--- Why? ** because he's Abraham's son

--- So, Ishmael is to be taken care of because he is related to Abraham; who else have we recently heard about who was taken care of because of Abraham? ** Lot, in being saved from Sodom

=== So God really thinks a lot of Abraham, doesn't He?

--- What, in reality, will be the result of this sibling rivalry; what purpose will it serve? ** it separates the son of promise from his older brother

=== It absolutely prevents a precedent for a situation like Jacob and Esau's, and it prevents Ishmael from even thinking that he is to be the heir.

=== Another scenario. Abraham is old; he's called old; he's 100 yrs old. How much longer is he going to last? He has a trained army, remember? So he's sort of a little king. If he were to die in the next few years, who would take over and run this mini-kingdom? Would Sarah? Would a toddler? Or would a handsome, strapping young man, who would certainly have been thinking ahead and ingratiating himself with this army? Ever heard of a palace coup?! There is chance of a lot of politics being involved here.

--- But who had God said was to be the heir? ** Isaac

=== So sending Ishmael and his mother away now, was a wonderful political move if there weren't to be intrigue, lying, deceit, conniving, or even assassination later. So God has made an occasion here through Ishmael's mocking of Isaac, it seems to me, in order to save a lot of potential trouble later on.

*-- Gen. 21:14 How promptly does Abraham act concerning this? ** very; he sends them away early the next day.

--- Who actually does the sending away in this verse, Sarah or Abraham? ** Abraham

=== I find it interesting that Sarah doesn't want them around, but she doesn't feel as if she were in a position to have the authority actually to send them away or something, because she has Abraham do it himself. Of course, it would carry more weight that way. Also, Ishmael couldn't try going around to Papa and protesting about Sarah's trying to get rid of him, either.

--- Does Abraham act with any regard for them as he sends them away? ** yes, he gives them food and water.

--- What direction does Hagar go? ** south

--- Where was Hagar from? ** Egypt

=== We can't say for sure, but she may have been heading toward home.

--- Interestingly, who does he have carry this food and water? ** Hagar

--- How does the verse refer to Ishmael? ** as a child

--- But how old do we know that he really was? ** at least in his middle teens

=== I've wondered why Abraham didn't give them a big load of provisions and have the young man Ishmael carry them! Of course, maybe Ishmael had a club or other weapon. But we aren't told.

=== As for his being spoken of as a child, remember that a man didn't seem to reach his majority until later in those days. Remember that later Benjamin, when Joseph wants him to come to Egypt, is referred to as a child, and he's about 30 yrs old and had 10 sons!

*-- Gen. 21:15-16 OK, so what happens to the provisions? ** they get used up

--- What does Hagar do about Ishmael then? ** she has Ishmael lie down under some bushes

--- Why would she have him under some shrubs? ** to protect him from the sun

--- And what does Hagar herself do? ** goes off and sits down quite a ways away

--- What does she evidently think is going to happen to them? ** they will die

--- But what should she have remembered from almost 20 years previously (Gen. 16:10)? ** that God had promised her numberless descendants, which, of course, she wouldn't have if Ishmael died now

=== But we humans often forget God's promises when we have troubles, don't we?

--- But why is she sitting a ways away from Ishmael; why isn't she with him, comforting him? ** she doesn't want to watch him die

--- And what does she do after that? ** starts crying

=== It sort of sounds as though Ishmael might have gotten sun stroke. One wonders if he were subject to it and that's why Abraham had Hagar carry the provisions. But that is nothing but speculation, so I'd better be careful!

--- How far away does it say that Hagar sat? ** about a bow's shot away.

=== I asked my husband how far a bow's shot was, and he seemed to think it would be about at least a block away, probably more like 2 or 3 blocks. That way she couldn't hear him as well as not see him as he died.

--- So at the end of these verses, what picture do we have? ** a desert, a stricken young man lying in the shade of some bushes (evidently at least moaning, we find out later), and his mother sitting about a block away weeping

*-- Gen. 21:17 Who heard Ishmael in his distress? ** God

--- And who now enters the picture? ** the angel of God

=== This seems to be God Himself talking. The angel of the Lord...

--- From where did the angel of God speak? ** from heaven

--- What, to us, seemingly stupid question does the angel of God ask Hagar? ** "What's wrong with you?"

=== Of course, I think that is more of a rhetorical question, as we might ask our children.

--- Does the angel of God wait for an answer? ** no, he just goes on talking

--- God is talking to Hagar, but who does God say that He heard? ** Ishmael's voice

--- What does God tell Hagar to do? ** not be afraid

--- Again, why shouldn't she be afraid? ** because God had heard Ishmael's voice

*-- Gen. 21:18 How does God refer to Ishmael? ** as a lad or boy

--- And what does God call Ishmael in the end of the verse? ** Abraham's son

=== Remember, that is why Ishmael is important; he's Abraham's son.

--- What is the first thing that God tells Hagar to do in this verse? ** to lift up the boy

--- And then do what? ** hold him by the hand

=== I find it interesting the little details that the Bible sometimes gives!

--- And what promise does God give concerning Ishmael? ** that He will make him into a great nation

--- Should this have been news to Hagar? ** no, before he was born, God had told her the same thing, or at least that he would have numberless descendants

--- So God is blessing Ishmael even though he isn't to be the heir; why might we suppose that to be? ** because of Abraham, his father

*-- Gen. 21:19 What does God now show Hagar? ** a well of water

--- How does God show it to her? ** He opened her eyes

=== Remember, they were in a desert and had run out of water, which would have meant death for both of them. But there evidently had been a well there all along, but Hagar miraculously hadn't seen it.

=== Now, we again could be self-righteous and say that Hagar should have more faith in God, that she should have remembered that God had promised about 20 years earlier that Ishmael would have lots of descendants, so he couldn't possibly die now. However, she was human, and in her situation, we probably would have reacted the same way.

--- What is the first thing that Hagar did when the Lord showed her the well? ** went and filled her canteen (so to speak)

--- Then what did she do? ** gave Ishmael some water

=== So, like any good mother, she's taking care of her child first.

--- And, again, what does it call this teenaged young man here? ** a lad or boy

*-- Gen. 21:20-21 Did God just show them the water and then forget about Ishmael? ** no, it says God was with him

--- Where did they go to live? ** in the wilderness of Paran

=== This is in the eastern central area of the Sinai Peninsula and probably became part of the land of Edom.

--- What did this young man become good in doing? ** being an archer

--- What good would this do him? ** it would mean food and protection

=== Remember, Ishmael is starting out alone. A man by himself can protect himself from a distance with a bow and arrows. He doesn't want to get into close combat with a group!

--- How does Ishmael get a wife? ** his mother gets him one

--- From where? ** from Egypt

--- Where was Hagar from? ** Egypt

=== Now we come to a different story.

*-- Gen. 21:22 Who visited Abraham? ** Abimelech and his General Phichol

--- Who is Abimelech? ** the king of at least the city of Gerar

--- Where have we heard of Abimelech before? ** he was the king who took Sarah when Abraham went to Philistia then returned her when God revealed she was Abraham's wife

--- What had Abimelech observed? ** that God was with Abraham in everything he did

=== He sounds like a rather God-fearing man, doesn't he?

--- Where does it sound as if Abraham is living now? ** still in Gerar

=== Remember, Abimelech had told Abraham that he could live wherever he wanted to in his land.

=== I don't think we can be dogmatic about it, but it seems to me that this is happening several years after the confusion about Sarah's being Abraham's sister and after Isaac is weaned and Ishmael sent off. I think this is all being recorded chronologically. Though that isn't the big point of this next incident.

*-- Gen. 21:23-24 What was the purpose of Abimelech's visit to Abraham? ** to get Abraham to swear that he would deal fairly with Abimelech and his son and grandson

--- Why does Abimelech think he is entitled to fair treatment from Abraham? ** because Abimelech had been good to Abraham and had dealt fairly with him

--- Had he? ** yes

--- How? ** he'd returned Sarah promptly, given gifts to Abraham, cleared Sarah's name with an extra gift, and had welcomed Abraham to live anywhere in the land that he wished

--- What did Abraham seem to think about this? ** well, at least he agreed and promised to deal fairly, so it would seem that he thought Abimelech had a right to expect this of him

--- Who does Abimelech call on to witness this oath, v. 23? ** God

*-- Gen. 21:25-26 After promising to deal fairly with Abimelech and his land and descendants, what does Abraham do? ** complains to Abimelech about a well that Abimelech's servants had taken away from him by force

--- What is so important about just a well? ** water is life, and it takes a lot of work to dig a well

=== We find out later in the chapter that this was a well that Abraham had dug.

--- What did Abimelech answer to that? ** that he hadn't known anything about this situation

--- Had Abraham complained to Abimelech before about this? ** no; this seems to be the first that Abimelech has heard about it.

*-- Gen. 21:27 What did Abraham and Abimelech do? ** made a covenant with each other

=== Now this makes me think about something.

--- Why might Phichol have been with Abimelech? ** well, to start with, a king probably didn't just travel around by himself! In fact, there may have been a small army or at least an honor guard there with him, but just the important one, the general, is mentioned. However, Phichol might also have been there to be a witness to this covenant.

--- What did Abraham give to Abimelech? ** a gift of sheep and oxen

--- Though we aren't really told, why do you think he did that? ** evidently as a sign that he, Abraham, really meant what he said when he promised to be fair with Abimelech and his descendants and land

*-- Gen. 21:28-30 What strange thing does Abraham do next? ** he set 7 female lambs over by themselves

--- Did Abimelech seem to know why? ** no, he asked Abraham why

--- What was the reason? ** Abraham was going to give the lambs to Abimelech, and they were to be a witness between the 2 men that Abimelech knew that Abraham had dug the well & it belonged to Abraham

=== When Abimelech accepted the gift of the 7 lambs, he would be acknowledging that the well was indeed Abraham's

*-- Gen. 21:31-34 What became the name of this place? ** Beersheba

=== Beersheba means "Well of seven" or "Well of the oath". The Bible dictionary says that the word for seven and for oath are almost identical in Hebrew. So Beersheba might mean either one. It was the well where the oath was made, but it was also the well where the 7 she-lambs were the witnesses to the oath. By the way, "beer" signifies an artificial well, one that has been dug, as opposed to a natural spring.

=== Beersheba eventually became the southernmost border of the land of the Jews. Dan was on the northernmost border. Hence the expression "from Dan to Beersheba".

--- Where did Abimelech and his general go then? ** it says "back to the land of the Philistines"

=== I imagine that he went back to Gerar, which was the capitol, but I wouldn't swear to it. I saw one note that said that at that time Beersheba was also in the land of the Philistines.

--- Where did Abraham go? ** he didn't; he stayed there at Beersheba

--- What did he do there first? ** planted a tamarisk tree or a grove

=== It's uncertain just which it is. However, if it were a grove, it would be a real grove of trees, not some pagan "grove". If it were simply a tamarisk tree, this is a bushy sort of thing with pretty pink & white blossoms in the springtime.

--- What was the second thing Abraham did there? ** called on the name of the Lord

=== Perhaps put up an altar, though it doesn't say so; it just says he called on the name of the Lord.

--- Where did Abraham live for quite a while? ** in Philistia

CHARTS (Abraham and Isaac)

REVIEW:

-- One could say that this chapter deals with 3 events; what are they? ** (1) the birth of Isaac, (2) the sending away of Ishmael, and (3) the oath between Abimelech and Abraham
-- How old were Abraham and Sarah when Isaac was born? ** 100 and 90
-- Where were they living at the time of his birth? ** Philistia
-- What led to the expulsion of Ishmael? ** he mocked Isaac, provoking a mother's wrath and jealousy for her son
-- Who was Ishmael's mother? ** Hagar
-- Who told Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away? ** first Sarah, then God
-- What happened to them after they went away? ** ran out of water and were going to die of thirst
-- Where were they? ** in the wilderness in the south (wilderness of Beersheba)
-- Who rescued them? ** God
-- Did they die? ** no
-- Who wanted a promise from Abraham? ** Abimelech, king of Philistia
-- What was that promise? ** that Abraham would deal fairly with Abimelech and his descendants and country
-- What prompted Abimelech to want this promise? ** he say that God was with Abraham
-- What did Abraham want from Abimelech in return? ** acknowledgment that the well at Beersheba was Abraham's

APPLICATION:

** God is faithful to keep his promises.
** God may bless people because of the faithfulness of others (Ishmael was blessed because he was a son of Abraham).
** We shouldn't be jealous of others .
** We shouldn't make fun of others.
** It is a joyful thing to have children.
** When we're in trouble, we should remember God's promises and pray.
** God is sovereign; He runs things.
** We should be respectful to our superiors.

Chapter 22: Abraham Told to Sacrifice Isaac

I started a chart of the life of Isaac at this point, also. You can fill in his birth now. This chart is at the end of this booklet in Teacher Helps.

*-- Gen. 22:1 "After these things..." After what "things" does this chapter apparently take place? ** after the birth of Isaac; after the expulsion of Ishmael; and after the treaty with Abimelech -- "after these things" of chapter 21

--- Who comes to whom and starts talking? ** God comes to Abraham

--- Can Abraham hear God? ** yes

--- How do you know? ** he answers God

--- For what purpose does God come and talk to Abraham? ** to test Abraham

*-- Gen. 22:2 What does God tell Abraham to do? ** go sacrifice Isaac

--- Is Abraham just going to offer Isaac as a worker for God or just present him before God, or just what? ** he's to kill Isaac and burn him up, a burnt offering

--- In what 2 ways does God refer to Isaac? ** (1) as Abraham's only son, and (2) whom Abraham loves

--- Did Abraham actually have any other sons? ** yes, Ishmael

--- Then why did the Lord call Isaac Abraham's only son? ** Isaac was the son of promise -- and the only one by his wife Sarah

--- Where was Ishmael at this time? ** somewhere off in the desert of Paran

--- How will Abraham know where to go to do this? ** God will show him

--- Where will it be? ** in the land of Moriah on a mountain that God will show him

=== We aren't told here just where Abraham was at this time, but if he were still at Beersheba, this would be a journey of about 40 miles. From v. 19 it would seem that he was still living in Beersheba, though.

--- Had Abraham ever started out to an unknown (to him) destination before? ** yes, when he left Haran

=== However, it could be that God here had gone on and described exactly which mountain this would be. I don't think v. 2 is clear on that. But we know later that God tells him just where to go.

*-- Gen. 22:3 How promptly did Abraham obey God? ** "early the next morning"

--- Are we told anything that Abraham might have said to God or argued with God about this? ** no

--- God is telling Abraham to destroy Isaac; once before when God had been going to destroy something, did Abraham try to argue God out of it? ** yes, in the case of Sodom

--- In relation to Isaac's birth, when had that with Sodom been? ** the year before Isaac was born

=== We'll find out later that Isaac is now at least a good sized boy, probably a young man. So Abraham has had quite a few years to learn to trust God even more.

=== But remember, this was set up as a test for Abraham, testing his faith in God and God's promises. Sodom hadn't been set up that way.

--- What did Abraham take with him? ** Isaac, 2 young men, at least one donkey, and the chopped up fire wood

--- And where is he headed? ** toward the place that God had told him

*-- Gen. 22:4-5 How long did they travel before coming to the appointed place? ** into the 3rd day

=== That gave him a lot of time to think about what lay ahead, didn't it!

--- What does Abraham tell the 2 young men who are with him to do? ** to wait there for him and Isaac

--- What does he call Isaac? ** the lad, the boy

--- What does he tell them that he and Isaac are going to do? ** go over there and worship and then come back

=== This seems to say that he was saying they would both be coming back.

--- Are we given any details of Abraham's feelings? ** none

=== We'll get into what Hebrews has to say about this later.

*-- Gen. 22:6 What does Abraham take with him as he prepares to go sacrifice his son to God? ** the split wood, Isaac, a knife, and fire

--- How could he take fire "in his hand"? ** probably burning coals in a pot of some sort

=== In pioneer days, if your fire went out and you had a neighbor, you'd take a covered vessel and go "borrow some fire" in the form of burning coals. Then you'd hurry home before the coals had time to go out. Of course, they could be banked up good in ashes, too. But it was quicker than starting a fire from scratch.

--- Though the donkey isn't mentioned in this verse, could he actually have taken the donkey with him to carry the firewood? ** no, it says he put it on Isaac

--- What do we know about the age of Isaac? ** we aren't told anything except that he was old enough to be able to carry a good load of firewood

=== So he wasn't a toddler. He could have been anywhere from 12 to 37 as far as we can tell. I say "37", because in the next chapter he is 37. Since he is a type of Christ, I've heard people conjecture that he was 30; I believe that Josephus says he was 25; but then I've heard others say that he must have been nearer 12, since otherwise he could have fought off his father. The long and the short of it is that we just don't know -- except that he was old enough to be able to carry the firewood, which must have been a fairly good sized load if it were meant to burn up the offering.

*-- Gen. 22:7-8 What sensible question does Isaac ask? ** we have the wood and fire, but where is the lamb that we're to offer?

--- Looking at the very end of v. 6, does this question seem to have been asked before they started out or as they are climbing the mountain? ** as they are climbing; it says they both went off together, and then it has the question

=== I wonder that Isaac hadn't asked the question earlier. Also I wonder what Abraham had told Isaac was the purpose of this trip.

--- Anyway, what answer does Abraham give his beloved son? ** that God will provide a lamb for himself

--- What do they do after the question and answer? ** continue walking

*-- Gen. 22:9-10 Did Abraham just pick the spot for the sacrifice himself after he got in the general area? ** no, he went just where God had told him to go

--- What did he build there? ** an altar

--- Does it sound as if Abraham planned on actually going through with the idea of killing Isaac? ** yes

--- Does he seem to have gotten all ready and then just sort of stood around waiting to see if God would intervene? ** no

--- What makes you say this? ** because he got busy and built the altar and put on the wood "in order", then he tied up Isaac, and was actually picking up the knife to kill him

--- And what are we told about what Isaac was doing during all of this? ** we're told nothing at all

=== All sorts of speculation has been made as to what Isaac was doing during this time. Some say that he must have been young enough so that Abraham could overpower him and tie him up anyway. In which case, if Isaac had been older, I say that Abraham could have hit him over the head first! Others say that since Isaac was a type of Christ, that Isaac must have willingly let himself be tied up and put on the altar. But I say that we aren't told, so we just don't know, and if we were to speculate all day long, we still wouldn't know. So let's just go on. Isaac is on the altar, and Abraham is reaching for and picking up the knife.

=== My guess would be that he wasn't going to stab him; he was going to slit his throat, since that is the way that we know later God had people kill the animals for sacrifice.

=== We can't help but imagine the anguish of Abraham's mind during this entire 3 day trip and then the climb up the mountain and the building of the altar and the laying of the wood on. But let's go to that commentary on the Old Testament and see what else Abraham knows that must be bolstering him up during this ordeal. (By "commentary", I mean the New Testament, of course!)

*-- Heb. 11:17-19 What was Abraham remembering during all of this time? ** that God had promised that all of the promises that God had given to Abraham would be fulfilled through Isaac and Isaac's descendants

--- At this time does Isaac have any descendants? ** no

--- So what is the logical conclusion of this man who trusted in God's faithfulness to His own promises? ** that even if God told him to kill this son of promise, and if he did kill him, that God was able to and would resurrect Isaac in order to fulfill them

--- What "fruit of the spirit" is Abraham exercising here to an almost unbelievable extent? ** faith

=== He knew what God had promised. He knew just as surely that God fulfilled His promises. And he trusted that, no matter what happened to Isaac, Isaac would be alive to be able to have his part in this fulfillment. Now that is faith! And this is what God is testing.

--- Would you say that Abraham passed the test? ** absolutely

--- By the way, what does it mean in the last part of v. 19 about "in a figure" or "as a type" or "figuratively speaking"? ** that in Abraham's mind Isaac would actually be dead, so then even though he hadn't actually killed him, Isaac had been "as good as dead" but now he was alive; also, both Abraham and Sarah had been so old that in a sense Isaac was given to them when they were "dead", at least sexually dead

=== So let's go back to Genesis.

*-- Gen. 22:11-12 Who again enters the picture? ** God

--- What 2 ways is God referred to in these 2 verses? ** v. 11 "the angel of the Lord", v. 12 "from me"

--- Is this a visit where God is standing beside Abraham as He did when he ate dinner in front of the tent? ** no, this time God called to Abraham "out of heaven"

--- What does God say that is very apparent about Abraham now? ** that Abraham really feared Him now

--- Do you think that God knew this before putting Abraham through this terrible ordeal? ** of course; God knows everything

--- Then what could possibly have been the object of all of this? ** I think it is 3 fold: (1) to show Abraham the extent of his own faith, (2) to show us an outstanding example of faith, and (3) to give us another "type of Christ" to look at

=== What better "type of Christ" than for the father of the Jews to be willing to sacrifice his son of promise, the only person through whom the promises of God could be fulfilled.

--- Why do I say "the only person through whom the promises of God could be fulfilled"? **

because God Himself had said the promises would be fulfilled through Isaac

--- Again, even though Abraham has Ishmael as his son, how does God refer to Isaac in these verses? ** as Abraham's only son

=== So this is really a picture of Jesus, the really only Son of the Father. And only through Jesus could the promises of salvation be fulfilled.

--- Again, in what sense is Isaac the "only" son? ** he is the only son through Abraham's wife/half-sister, Sarah

=== Later with Jacob, we will see that God seems to honor the 1st wife in bigamous marriages above the others. Leah will have honors that Rachel and the 2 handmaidens won't have.

--- Are we told anything of what was going through Isaac's mind during all of this? ** no!

=== Notice how bare of details this account is. We would have put in at least a few sentences detailing Abraham's agony on his journey and his intense relief now that, even though God would have to resurrect Isaac if he did kill him, that he wouldn't have to knife and burn up Isaac before God resurrected him. There are just no details given on this!

=== Wouldn't you love to know! But that isn't the important thing here, so God doesn't tell us.

*-- Gen. 22:13-14 What does Abraham now see? ** a ram that is caught in the bushes

--- How is it caught? ** by his horns

--- The NIV doesn't give this detail except in a footnote, but where do the KJ and NAS say that the ram was? ** behind Abraham

=== So here we do have details! The ram is behind Abraham and caught by his horns! But we don't know how either Abraham or Isaac felt!!

--- So what does Abraham use as a sacrifice? ** the ram

--- Earlier as they had toiled their way up that mountain, Isaac, carrying the firewood had asked his father a question; what had it been, v. 7? ** "where is the lamb"

--- What had been Abraham's answer? ** "God will provide Himself a lamb"

--- Was a literal lamb provided? ** no

--- What was provided? ** a ram

--- Which would be more valuable, a lamb or a ram? ** a ram

--- And now Who had provided this ram? ** God

--- What does Abraham name this place? ** Jehovahjirah

--- Do you have a footnote that tells what that means? ** "The Lord will see"

=== My Bible has a footnote "The Lord will see" or "provide". I wondered which it really was, so I looked it up in the concordance. It means "see" in both a literal and figurative sense, such as "appear, approve, consider, take heed, prove, regard have respect for", etc. One of my Bible dictionaries said "see to it". To me, at least, this helped me understand how it could mean both "The Lord will see" and "The Lord will provide". Before I couldn't see a connection between "see" & "provide", but this makes sense to me now.

=== Now for a few words on the location of this mountain where Abraham almost offered Isaac. It is thought to be the same place that will come up in I Chronicles 21, the threshing floor of Ornon, where David saw the angel of death stop in the slaughter of the people and where David then, by the command of God set up an altar. We know from II Chronicles 3:1, that the spot where David had built the altar was the spot where Solomon later built his temple and that this was in Mount Moriah. So it would seem that God had again used little pictures to portray the coming sacrifice of Jesus.

=== (The Jews go so far as to say that the spot where the altar of burnt offering was, in Solomon's temple was the very spot where Abraham had prepared his altar for Isaac, but I don't think they could know this exactly.)

--- And, of course, where was Jesus crucified in relation to where Isaac was almost sacrificed? ** very near it, just outside of Jerusalem, near this spot

*-- Gen. 22:15-18 This is actually a 5th Covenant that the Lord makes with Abraham. I guess we should have included it in the other 4 covenants, but it contains nothing new, so I didn't.

--- What is the content of this covenant? ** that Abraham will have many descendants and all nations of the earth will be blessed through them and they will conquer their enemies

--- What reason does God give for restating this? ** that this will be done because Abraham obeyed God and had been willing to sacrifice Isaac to Him

--- We are told to be careful when making oaths; by Whom does God make this oath? ** by Himself

=== I think this shows us just how serious it is when people swear and use the Lord's name in vain. God thought He Himself was important enough to make His own oath by Himself; so we should be extra careful how we use His name.

--- Does it sound as if the Lord Himself is speaking? ** yes

--- And what does it call the Lord in v. 15? ** the angel of the Lord

--- When does this seem to have happened? ** right after Abraham offered the ram on the altar instead of Isaac

*-- Gen. 22:19 What does Abraham do after all of this harrowing experience? ** returns to the 2 young men who were waiting for him and goes back home

=== Which again shows that God spoke in v. 15-18 right after Abraham hadn't killed Isaac.

--- Where was he living at this time? ** still in Beersheba in the land of the Philistines

--- What do we know has happened before at Beersheba? ** where the covenant with Abimelech and the treaty about the well occurred, also the area where Hagar was wandering when they ran out of water

=== It was a general area; we wouldn't say that Poway was just one square block. There could certainly be large herds in one spot and some one running out of water across town.

=== Now, before we go on, there are 2 things I want us to consider here. The first is about human sacrifice. There are places in the Bible where God commands the Jews to wipe out various people, such as the Amalakites.

--- But is there anywhere else in the Bible that you can think of that God commands someone to kill a human as a sacrifice to Him? ** no, at least not that I can think of

--- But did God actually plan on having Abraham carry through on this? ** no

=== Which brings us to the second thing I want us to think about.

--- How did Abraham know in the first place that God wanted him to sacrifice Isaac? ** the Lord spoke to him

=== Now, we often hear people say, "The Lord told me to..." Let's think about this.

--- Had Abraham ever had any experience before this of the Lord's speaking to him? ** yes

--- When? ** when he left Ur, when he left Haran and received the first blessing, when he received the second promise from God after parting from Lot, when he received the third promise from God at the time of the divided sacrifice, when he received the fourth promise and the sign of circumcision, when the Lord and two angels appeared in person to him outside his tent and he fed them and the Lord told him about the upcoming destruction of Sodom, when God told him to go ahead and send Hagar and Ishmael away

=== But someone could say that these were all just something that Abraham said had happened, that no one else had heard the Lord speak.

--- But had anyone else heard the Lord speak in any of these times? ** yes, Sarah and any of the servants who might have been around could have that one time

--- Had anyone else heard the Lord speak to them (though not to Abraham personally) concerning Abraham? ** yes, Abimelech concerning Sarah, Hagar when she's pregnant, and then Hagar when she and Ishmael are sent away (though Abraham probably wouldn't have known about that second time)

=== So once Abraham had seen the burning lamp pass between the sacrifices and another time Abraham had seen the Lord in person at his tent. He's had a lot of experience with hearing the Lord speak.

--- Over how many years for sure do we know that this had been going on at this point in time? ** at least 30, probably more like 40.

--- Now, why had we read in the book of Hebrews that Abraham had been willing to sacrifice Isaac? ** because he believed God's promises and knew that God could resurrect him in order to fulfill those promises

--- The people that we hear saying, "The Lord told me...", would you figure they had had the experiences of Abraham? ** no

=== My conclusion on this is that we should be very careful when we say that the Lord told us to do something unless, of course, it is a clear command in the Bible itself.

=== But let's finish up the chapter here.

*-- Gen. 22:20 Concerning whose family does Abraham hear? ** the family of Nahor

--- Are we told how Abraham happened to get news of them? ** no

--- Who was Nahor? ** Abraham's brother

--- Where did we last hear about Nahor, Gen. 11:29? ** when Abraham had first left Ur and gone to Haran

--- Who had Nahor married? ** Milcah

--- Do you remember who was the father of Milcah, 11:29? ** Haran

--- And who was Haran? ** Abraham's brother who had died back in Ur before they left it

--- So what relationship was Nahor to his wife? ** uncle

*-- Gen. 22:21-24 What is the name of the last mentioned child that Milcah had? ** Bethuel

--- And what is the name of Bethuel's daughter? ** Rebekah

--- Later on we'll also hear the name of Bethuel's son; what is that? ** Laban

--- And where are we going to hear of Rebekah again? ** she will marry Isaac

=== So God is now putting in the background for getting Isaac a wife in 2 chapters from now.

CHARTS

REVIEW:

-- What, in a sentence, is this chapter about? ** the near sacrifice of Isaac

-- Where is Abraham living at the time? ** still at Beersheba in Philistia

-- What does God tell Abraham to do? ** burn up Isaac as a sacrifice to God

-- Why does God tell him this? ** to test Abraham's faith

-- How do we find, from the New Testament that this showed Abraham's faith in the power of God? ** Abraham knew that Isaac was the son of promise, so he knew that God would resurrect Isaac if need be in order to fulfill His promises

-- Who and what did Abraham take with him as he started out? ** 2 young men, a donkey, Isaac, and firewood

-- How did he know where to go? ** God told him

-- How long did he travel? ** 3 days

-- When they got there, who went with Abraham to the actual sacrifice? ** just Isaac; not the

2 young men

-- What question and answer took place as they climbed the mountain? ** "Here is wood and fire; where is lamb?" and "God will provide"
-- How close did Abraham come to actually killing Isaac? ** all but the actual stabbing, even had the knife in his hand
-- Who stopped him? ** God
-- How did God provide the sacrifice? ** there was ram caught by horns in bushes
-- What did God say was His reason for stopping Abraham? ** He knew Abraham would actually have done it
-- What eventually happens at or near the place where Isaac was nearly sacrificed? ** Solomon's temple and eventually the crucifixion would be right near it
-- What new character is introduced at the end of this chapter? ** Rebekah
-- What relation is she to Abraham? ** great-niece

APPLICATIONS:

** God works things out -- though often in mysterious ways
** God may test our faith, but it is to strengthen us.
** God always remembers His promises and fulfills them.
** God doesn't test us beyond our strength.
** God provides what we need, whether it be for a sacrifice or whatever.
** When things look dark for us, remember the ram in the thicket.
** Abraham was stronger after all of this; iron is made strong by beating, and troubles make us stronger.
** When we have troubles or testings, we should remember the promises of God.
** We shouldn't use the name of the Lord lightly.
** We should be careful about saying, "The Lord told me..."
** No matter what happens, we should "trust and obey."

Chapter 23: Death of Sarah and Purchase of Cave of Machpelah

-- Where are Abraham and Sarah living as chapter 22 closes? ** in Philistia

-- Have they been living there long? ** yes, since some time after the destruction of Sodom back in chapter 20

*-- Gen. 23:1-2 Where are Abraham and Sarah now living? ** in Hebron

--- Is that still in Philistia? ** no, in Canaan

=== So somewhere between the 22nd and 23rd chapters Abraham moved back to Canaan from Philistia

--- And what had happened the last time that we heard that Abraham was living in Hebron? ** that's where he was living the Lord and 2 angels visited him and when Sodom was destroyed

--- Anyway, what sad event now happens? ** Sarah dies

--- How old was she? ** 127 yrs

--- How old would that make Abraham? ** 137 yrs

--- And how old would that make Isaac? ** 37 yrs

--- How did Abraham react to her death? ** mourned and wept

=== Of course, ceremonially that would be done, but my guess would be that this was done in sincerity also.

--- At least how long had they been married?** at least 62 years

--- How do you know that? ** Abraham was 75 when he left Haran and 147 when Sarah died; 147-75=62

=== Of course, we don't know when they got married, it could have been many years before that; but we aren't told. But we know for sure that they were married at least 62 years. This isn't important, but it does add a touch of human interest.

*-- Gen. 23:3 Who did Abraham talk to at this time? ** the sons of Heth

--- Heth was a son of Canaan; who was Canaan? ** grandson of Noah through Ham

--- What was special about Canaan? ** he was cursed by Noah because of his father Ham's disrespect

=== These aren't the literal sons of Heth here; this just means that they are descended from Heth. Heth is considered the forefather of the Hittites. Later Esau marries a couple of the daughters of Heth.

--- What is this land called in Genesis? ** the land of Canaan

=== Named, of course, after the cursed Canaan. So again we see that Abraham is back in the land of Canaan.

*-- Gen. 23:4 What does Abraham call himself? ** a foreigner and traveler among them

--- What does Abraham want from the sons of Heth? ** to buy a grave site from them so that he can bury Sarah

--- But hadn't God promised all of this land to Abraham? ** yes

--- How much does Abraham now own? ** none

=== Well, don't you think that by this time Abraham might be losing faith in God's ever fulfilling His promise? Let's take a look and see.

*-- Heb. 11:8-11, 13 In v. 13, what do Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who all received the promise of this land of Canaan, call themselves? ** strangers and pilgrims on earth

--- In v. 9, what is the land of Canaan called? ** the land of promise

--- What was Abraham looking for (v. 10) as he lived as a nomad in the land of Canaan? ** a city that God would make

--- According to v. 13, did they finally decide that God wasn't going to keep His promises? **

no, they knew that God was faithful and that this was still for "their seed".

=== They sort of saw a glimpse of the fulfillment, according to the Bible. But they all 3 knew that the promises were definitely going to be fulfilled.

--- Has this promise of having the whole land forever been fulfilled yet? ** no

--- Will it ever be fulfilled? ** yes

--- When? ** at least after the return of Jesus

--- What does the Bible call their attitude (v. 13)? ** faith

=== Faith equals believing, doesn't it?

=== So we're back to Abraham, who has been promised all of this land, who is now widowed and has no place to bury his wife.

*-- Gen. 23:5-6 Do the "children of Heth" seem to be on friendly terms with Abraham? ** yes

--- What do they think of him; how do they consider him? ** that he is a mighty prince among them

=== Remember, it wasn't just Abraham and his wife and son and a few cattle that were living out there. Abraham was very rich in slaves and herds and flocks and had a standing army of his own. That army had been 318 at least 50 years earlier, and was probably much bigger by now.

--- Are they willing to grant his request for the purchase of a burial place for Sarah? ** very much so

--- Which of them does it say would be willing to provide a place for him? ** all of them; choose any place he wants

--- Are they just offering a piece of land for him to dig a hole in or what? ** no, they're offering their own grave sites

*-- Gen 23:7-9 What polite beginning does Abraham use? ** he stands up and bows to the people

=== That was probably the custom.

--- Are the descendants of Heth also strangers and wanderers in this land? ** no; they are the people "of the land"

--- What specific land does Abraham want? ** a cave that is at the end of a field that belongs to Ephron, the son of Zohar

--- Does Abraham just want to borrow this cave? ** no, he wants to buy it for his own

=== Remember, the area is riddled with caves, and those are easy to use for burial. Also, I understand that the ground is very rocky in a lot of Palestine, which makes for hard digging.

--- Is Abraham talking directly to Ephron, or just what? ** he is talking as if Ephron were not there -- "ask him for me"

--- Does Abraham expect a bargain in the price since he is just freshly widowed? ** no, he expects to pay what it is worth

*-- Gen. 23: 10-11 Who do we see here may actually have been among the people that Abraham was talking to? ** Ephron, the son of Zohar

=== Of course, they may have gone and gotten Ephron, but that's not important. My feeling is that this was probably the polite way of doing it. Sort of not putting Ephron on the spot, so to speak.

=== This verse almost makes it sound as if the children of Heth and the Hittites were 2 different groups, but it sounds to me as if they were all Hittites, but Ephron might not have been so directly related to this particular group of Hittites. I don't know. But, again, that isn't important and isn't the point here.

--- Where do we find out that Abraham is as he talks with the men about buying a burial place for Sarah? ** at the gate of the city

=== So we find out that Hebron isn't just an area of land. It has a city there.

=== Remember, that the gate of the city is where a lot of the business of a city was done. Everyone who came in or out of the city could be seen, and often the elders would gather there and discuss the business of the city. It was sort of the city hall.

--- How much money does Ephron say he wants for the cave? ** nothing; he offers it as a gift to Abraham

--- Is he offering just the cave by itself? ** no, the field also

--- On whom does Ephron call to witness that he is offering just to give the field and cave to Abraham without cost? ** his relatives who are standing around there

*-- Gen. 23:12-13 Again, in what polite way does Abraham begin before talking? ** bows before everyone there

--- This time, to whom does he speak? ** directly to Ephron

--- Have the 2 of them gone off to the side by themselves to talk? ** no, Abraham is speaking to Ephron right there in front of everyone

--- What does Abraham want now? ** he's insisting on paying for the field and not just taking advantage of Ephron's offer of it as a gift

--- Does Abraham name a price he's willing to pay? ** no

--- So who is it up to to name a price? ** Ephron

*-- Gen. 23: 14-15 Does Ephron come right out and name a price he wants for it? ** no, he just says how much it's worth

--- Put Ephron's answer in your own words. ** the land is worth such and such amount of money, but so what; just go ahead and take it

--- So might we, here in our culture, think that he's saying that he still wants to give the land to Abraham? ** that's what the words seem to be saying

=== Now, what I'm going to say now is just hear-say. Many people think that this is all part of the "proper" way of doing things in that culture at that time. You offer to buy; he offers to give; you come back and insist on buying; he offers a price; any bargaining with the price follows. Now, I'm not used to bargaining, and I'm very uncomfortable with it. If someone gives me a price, I just figure that is the price they want and go ahead and pay it or reject it. But in many societies, that is part of the selling. You bargain. Three of my daughters are great bargainers. But that isn't in the over-all picture a part of our culture.

=== Again, I'm going by hear-say, but I've heard that this was a very steep sum to pay for the piece of land and cave. If that is correct, Ephron, while saying, "Oh, go ahead and take it" is naming a high price that the land and cave are supposedly worth.

*-- Gen. 23:16 Did Abraham haggle about the price? ** no, he just went ahead and paid it

--- Were there any witnesses to this business transaction? ** yes

--- Who? ** the sons of Heth (Hittites) who were there at the gate of the city

=== My guess is that many of them would be relatives of Ephron.

--- Is it good to have witnesses? ** yes!

--- What interesting detail is given about this money? ** that the weight was the accepted weight among the merchants

--- What do we learn about the culture of the land at that time from this little phrase? ** (1) there were standards for the money such as we used to have (a dollar = 1 ounce of silver), (2) there were merchants who made a business of being merchants, not just a shepherd trading something to another shepherd, and (3) silver was a means of exchange, not just barter such as a sheep for 100 pounds of potatoes, or the such

=== So it was a more sophisticated society than we might have supposed.

*-- Gen. 23:17-20 So Abraham had bought something from Ephron; just what exactly did he buy? ** a field with all of its trees and the cave in the field

=== I like the NAS and NIV translations that says they were "deeded" to Abraham. It makes more sense to us now than the KJ "were made sure".

--- After buying this, what did Abraham do? ** buried Sarah in the cave.

--- And where is this cave? ** in Hebron in the land of Canaan

=== And that cave and field of Machpelah is all of the land of Canaan that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob themselves will own in person during their lifetimes! But they believed God's promises of eternal possession of the land. Later David and Solomon owned it, but they gradually lost it. But someday they will have it forever.

CHARTS

REVIEW:

-- What 2 events is this chapter about? ** (1) death of Sarah, and (2) buying of a place to bury her

-- How old were Sarah and Abraham when she died? ** 127 and 137

-- How much of the land of Canaan, the promised land, did Abraham own at the time of her death? ** none, not even enough in which to bury her

-- Where were they living? ** back in Hebron in the land of Canaan

-- How does Abraham go about getting a burial site for Sarah? ** approaches the people of the land at the gate of the city and asks them

-- How was Abraham thought of? ** highly considered, spoken of as a mighty prince

-- Were the people willing to let him have a grave for Sarah? ** yes, they said that any of them would let him have their own tombs

-- Did he have a place in mind? ** yes, when they said he could have whatever place he wanted, he asked for a specific cave that belonged to Ephron

-- What "nationality" of people were these? ** Hittites

-- From whom are they descended? ** Ham, through Canaan

-- What do we know about Canaan? ** he was cursed by Noah

-- Did Ephron let Abraham have his cave? ** yes

-- Did Abraham bargain with Ephron about it? ** no

-- What all did Ephron sell to Abraham? ** the cave, the field it was in, and the trees in the field

-- What is the name of the cave? ** the cave of Machpelah

== According to my 1964 Bible Dictionary, a moslem mosque now stands over the cave and no one is allowed to enter it.

-- Do we know (not from this chapter) if anyone else will ever be buried in this cave? ** yes, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah

APPLICATIONS:

** Sorrow comes to everyone, even those particularly loved of God.

** Abraham was promised all of the land of Canaan from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates, but when his wife died, he didn't own enough land on which to bury her. So, though we know that God is faithful to fulfill His promises, His timing often isn't ours and we should content ourselves with His timing.

** We should be considerate of those in sorrow.
** It’s acceptable to mourn for our dead, even those whom we will again see in heaven.
** We should be gracious when we ask for something and not expect to get it for nothing.
** We should honor the dead.
** We should have faith that God will fulfill His promises.

A Review of Abraham's life up to this Point

=== This is a good point at which to take a break and review what we know about Abraham. From this point on the focus pretty much shifts from Abraham to Isaac and then to Jacob and Esau. We're not going to read any verses, but we will take it chapter by chapter. If we get stuck, I'll tell you the chapter.

--- Gen. 11 Which of Noah's sons was Abraham descended from? ** Shem

--- Who was Abraham's father? ** Terah

--- Where was he born? ** Ur

--- Where is Ur? ** in Mesopotamia

--- Why did Abraham leave Ur? ** God told him to

--- Did Abraham know where he was going? ** no, God said He'd show him

--- Where did Abraham go first? ** to Haran

--- Was he alone? ** no, his wife, father, nephew Lot, and brother Nahor and Nahor's wife were with him

--- What about Lot's father? ** he (Haran) had died while they were still in Ur

--- What was the name of Abraham's wife? ** Sarah

--- Act. 7 How long did they stay in Haran? ** until his father died

--- Why did Abraham leave Haran after his father died? ** God told him to

--- Gen. 12 Where did God have Abraham go? ** to Canaan

--- From which of Noah's sons were the Canaanites descended from? ** Ham

--- How old was Abraham when he left Haran to go to Canaan? ** 75

--- How old was Sarah then? ** 65

--- How many children did Abraham have at this time? ** none

--- What does God do concerning Abraham around this time? ** 1st Covenant: (1) Land to seed; (2) Abraham great nation; blesses Abraham; (3) Abraham's name great; (4) Abraham be blessing and all world blessed in him; (5) bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him

--- What happened evidently fairly soon, at least within a few years, after Abraham got to Canaan? ** a famine in Canaan

--- So what did Abraham do? ** went to Egypt

--- What happened there? ** Abraham had Sarah say she was his sister and Pharaoh took Sarah, God plagued, Pharaoh gave her back, gave riches, told Abraham to leave

--- Was Abraham rich or poor? ** rich, many herds

--- Gen 13 After returning to Canaan, what happened between Abraham and Lot? ** too rich in herds, not enough pasture land, so they parted company

--- Where did each go? ** Lot toward Sodom (fertile plain); Abraham toward the mountains

--- What does God do now? ** 2nd covenant: (1) will get all land he sees; (2) land to him and seed forever; (3) seed as dust, so many

--- Gen. 14 What, sometime in the next few years, happened to Lot in Sodom? ** Chedorlaomer came and captured him with others, and Abraham rescued him

--- Who does Abraham meet while returning back to Hebron with the people? ** Melchizedek

--- What do we know about Melchizedek? ** he was a priest of God and a type of Christ

--- Gen. 15 Sometime after this what does God do? ** 3rd Covenant: (1) reassures that is same God as in Ur; (2) land from River of Egypt to Euphrates will be given to his seed; (3) (1) Abraham will have a son; (4) seed as stars, so many; (5) promises about seed: strangers, serve, afflicted, 400 yrs, nation judged, leave rich, 4th generation; (6) Abraham live long time and die in peace

--- What sign does God give to Abraham that it's all true? ** divided sacrifice, burning lamp and smoking furnace

--- Gen. 16 After this 3rd Covenant, how do Abraham and Sarah "help" God? ** Sarah gives him Hagar to have a son by

--- Who is her son? ** Ishmael

--- How old is Abraham when Ishmael born? ** 86 years

--- So all of the things that happened after Abraham left Haran took place in how many years? ** 11 years

--- Gen. 17 God gives another promise, a 4th; what is really different about it? ** (1) Sarah will have a son; (2) God institutes circumcision

--- What was circumcision to remind them of? ** that God would be the God of Abraham's seed, and they would inherit all of that land forever

--- So how many covenants has God made with Abraham? ** 4

--- And in how many of these has the land been promised to Abraham and his seed forever? ** 2 of them

--- And does God always fulfill His promises? ** yes

--- So can we expect this promise of "forever" to be fulfilled some time in the future? ** yes

=== Remember, later there is a 5th promise, but this has nothing new in it at all, so we didn't include it on our chart.

--- How old are Abraham and Sarah at the time of this 4th covenant? ** 99 years and 89 years

--- What do we know about Sarah's relationship to Abraham? ** that she's Abraham's half-sister

--- Gen. 18 Evidently just a little while after this 4th Covenant, Abraham has 3 visitors; who are they? ** God the Son and 2 angels

--- What promise does God give again at this time? ** that Sarah will have a son the next year

--- Who overhears this? ** Sarah

--- After the meal as He's preparing to leave, what does the Lord say was the purpose of His visit? ** to check out Sodom

--- So after Abraham knows that this visitor is the Lord, what conversation goes on between them? ** Abraham bargains God into promising not to destroy Sodom if there are only 10 righteous men there

--- What is Abraham's special concern with Sodom? ** his nephew Lot lives there

--- Gen. 19 Where did the 2 angels go after leaving Abraham? ** to Sodom

--- What happened to them there? ** Lot takes them in, and the men of the city want to rape them

--- How does Lot leave Sodom? ** he's dragged out by the angels

--- Is anyone else rescued? ** yes, Lot's wife and 2 daughters

--- What happened to the wife? ** she looked back and was turned to salt

--- How did Abraham find out that there weren't 10 righteous men in Sodom? ** he got up early in the morning and looked out and saw smoke like a furnace rising up from the Jordan valley

--- The Bible tells us why Lot was rescued; why was he? ** because God remembered Abraham, and Lot was Abraham's nephew

--- Where did Lot go from Sodom? ** he was told to go to mountains, but asked to go to the little city Zoar, went there, but ended up in mountains (as he'd been told in the first place!)

--- Where did he live? ** in a cave

--- What happened there? ** his 2 daughters got him drunk and had sons by him

--- What does the New Testament call Lot? ** a righteous man

--- What were the names of these 2 sons/grandsons of Lot? ** Ben-Ammi (Ammon) and Moab

--- Gen. 20 Where did Abraham go then? ** to Gerar

--- Who owned that land? ** the Philistines

--- What happened then? ** Sarah said she was his sister, Abimelech took her, God warned him in a dream

--- How old were Abraham and Sarah then? ** 99 and 89

--- How did Abimelech's treatment of Abraham differ from Pharaoh's some 15 to 20 years earlier? ** Pharaoh gave riches and told them to leave; Abimelech gave riches, a special gift to show Sarah's innocence, and told him to live anywhere in the land that he wanted to

--- Did he evidently stay in Philistia for some years then? ** yes

--- Gen. 21 What wonderful thing happened while they were living in the land of the Philistines? ** Isaac was born

--- How old was Abraham? ** 100

--- Sarah? ** 90

--- Ishmael? ** 14

--- What happened probably when Isaac was weaned? ** there was a party, Ishmael mocked him, Sarah is angry and has Abraham send Ishmael and Hagar away

--- What did God think of that? ** told Abraham to do as Sarah wanted

--- About how old was Ishmael at this time? ** probably between 17 and 19

--- Where were they living at the time, Philistia or Canaan? ** still in Philistia

--- Briefly, what happened to Ishmael and Hagar? ** they wandered in the wilderness, ran out of water, Ishmael was dying, Hagar was crying, God comes, shows her a well, they lived in desert, and Hagar got him a wife from Egypt

--- Who does the Bible say that God heard crying in the wilderness, Hagar or Ishmael? ** Ishmael (Abraham's son)

--- What further adventures does Abraham have with Abimelech? ** (1) while he's still living in Philistia, Abimelech sees God blesses Abraham and wants a treaty that Abraham will always be good to Abimelech and his descendants; Abraham agrees, so (2) Abraham wants Abimelech to give him back the well there and to acknowledge that the well there was his; Abimelech agrees

--- Do you remember what Abraham named the place with the well? ** Beersheba, the well of the oath or seven

--- Gen. 22 Some years later, God asks Abraham to do something; what is it? ** to sacrifice Isaac

--- Briefly, tell what happened? ** Abraham goes to where God tells him, prepares to slay Isaac, is stopped by the Lord, and a ram is provided instead

=== This is the point in time where God makes a covenant again, the 5th time, with Abraham. But there was nothing new in it, so we didn't study it with our chart. However, we might want to remember the occasion when God sort of renews His other covenants -- it is after Abraham proved that he had enough faith in God even to be willing to sacrifice Isaac, his child of promise.

--- Gen. 23 When Isaac is 37, a very sad thing happens; what is it? ** his mother Sarah dies

--- Where were they living by then? ** back in Hebron

--- If Isaac were 37, how old was Sarah when she died? ** 127

--- And Abraham? ** 137

--- Where did Abraham bury Sarah? ** in a cave that he bought from the people of the area

--- What other land did Abraham own? ** none

=== I think it has been good for us to cover all of these points so that we can really have the "flow" of Abraham's life.

APPLICATION TO OUR LIVES: What so far have we gotten out of these stories of the life of Abraham that we could apply to our lives?

** God is faithful to fulfill His promises.
** God can fulfill His promises without our having to do anything questionable.
** We should try to be one of the "ten righteous men" that might help save our own cities and country.
** We may not be able to see or to understand God's plans, but He has a plan for each of us and He knows the plan and will carry it out -- and, as Romans 8 teaches, it is for our good if we love Him.
** Nothing is impossible with God.
** If we are righteous, God may bless others who are near and dear to us for our sakes.
** Obedience to God is of utmost importance, even if it is hard for us to obey.
** Our obedience and faith are counted to us for righteousness.
** We need to trust God in all circumstances.
** We shouldn't take shortcuts, but wait for God's timing instead.
** Homosexuality is wrong.
** We shouldn't "look back" (Lot's wife).

Chapter 24: A Bride for Isaac

=== Chapter 24 is full of customs that are strange to us and is very interesting and that we'll want to look at, also it is a very long chapter, but let's go ahead and start it and go as far as we can.

If you have to stop part way through, be sure to review well before going on.

=== Let's start with just one verse from the next chapter so that we can hang this event where it belongs in the lives of Abraham and Isaac.

*-- Gen. 25:20 How many years is this after Sarah dies? ** between just over 1 yr to almost 4 yrs.

--- So how old does that make Abraham and Isaac? ** 140 and 40

=== Remember, it's always easy to remember the ages of this family: Abraham was 10 years older than his wife Sarah and 100 years older than his son Isaac. So you either subtract 10 years from Abraham's age to find Sarah's age, or you subtract 100 years from Abraham's age to get Isaac's age. Or the other way around to get Abraham's age, of course.

*-- Gen. 24:1 So what does the Bible say about being 140? ** that Abraham is old and well stricken in age

=== By the way, we'll find out in the next chapter that Abraham lives 35 more years after this!

--- How could Abraham answer when people asked him, "How's life treating you?" ** he could say that God had blessed him in all things

--- Again, in just a few things? ** no, in everything

*-- Gen. 24:2 To whom does Abraham speak? ** to his servant

--- What job did this servant to have? ** he was in charge of everything

--- What does the Bible call this servant? ** the "oldest"

=== The NIV says "chief". But this is not a literal translation of the Hebrew word, it is an interpolation. There is a footnote in the NIV saying "oldest."

--- But what two literal meanings might we give to this word? ** (1) either that he was the oldest in years, or (2) that he was the one who had been a servant of Abraham the longest, oldest in service

--- But what does it seem to imply as to his importance? ** that he was a high ranking servant

--- People often try to say that this is Eleazar of Damascus.

--- Who was Eleazar of Damascus? ** the one who had been Abraham's heir before the birth of Ishmael

--- But are we told at all that this is Eleazar of Damascus? ** no

--- So do we really have any reason for thinking that? ** not that I can see

--- What do we know about this servant? ** that he was somehow the oldest one in the household, and he had charge of everything that Abraham owned

--- What would this imply about whether he could be trusted or not? ** that he could be entirely trusted with whatever task he was given

=== And then, again, we aren't told if he's the oldest in age or the one who has served Abraham the most years. Those aren't necessarily the same thing.

=== When my husband was in the Merchant Marine, on one ship when he was in his early 20s, he was "oldest" man, having been on that particular ship the longest.

=== So let's just say that Abraham is talking to one of his trusted servants.

=== Let's go on to the next verses, and then we'll come back to the end of this verse.

*-- Gen. 24:3 What is on Abraham's mind here now that his wife is dead and he's very old? ** a wife for Isaac

--- What insight do we get of the customs of the time regarding marriage? ** that at least sometimes, maybe often, a man just didn't go out and choose his own wife

=== I understand that most marriages were either made by the parents or at least through the parents. We have a later example of Shechem who wants to marry Dinah and asks his father to go speak to her father about it.

--- Who had chosen Ishmael's wife? ** his mother Hagar

--- Who is going to do the actual selecting of the wife for Isaac? ** this trusted servant

--- Where is this servant not to get a wife for Isaac? ** from among the Canaanites

--- How adamant is Abraham about not having a Canaanite daughter-in-law? ** he made the servant swear by God, the real God of heaven and earth

=== Now let's go back to the end of v. 2.

--- What strange way did they evidently have of making an oath in those days? ** by swearing while the one making the oath has his hand under the other person's thigh

=== To me that makes no sense, and there are various interpretations of what was going on. However, from what I can figure and what makes sense to me, is that this method of swearing an oath was connected with a very solemn way of swearing on the manhood of the person extracting the promise. Jacob did the same thing with Joseph in the end of Genesis. I wouldn't be surprised if our words "testament" and "testimony" were connected with it, also. You've heard of swearing by "my mother's grave" or "my father's beard". Well, again, I wouldn't be surprised if this were swearing by ones very manhood itself, something very serious. The words certainly seem connected. But I don't know for sure.

*-- Gen.24:4 In what land is this servant to get a wife for Isaac according to this verse? ** in Abraham's own land

--- And not from where? ** not from Canaan

--- Now, what land might we at first suppose that would be from what we know about Abraham? ** that it would be back in Mesopotamia, in Ur

--- Do we have any idea how old Abraham was when he left Ur? ** no, just that he was younger than 75 when his father Terah died and God called him to leave to Canaan

--- Do you remember who had left Ur with Abraham? ** his wife/half-sister Sarah, his father Terah, his dead brother Haran's son Lot, his brother Nahor and Nahor's wife Milcah (who was apparently their niece, Haran's daughter)

--- In the end chap. 22 we were told something about Nahor; what was it? ** that brother Nahor had had 8 sons by his wife Milcah and 4 more sons by his concubine, and that one of these sons (Bethuel) had a daughter named Rebekah

--- We know for a fact a little later that there was at least one other grandchild through Bethuel for Nahor, who was it? ** good old Laban

=== So there was probably a fairly good sized "colony" of Nahor's descendants living up in Haran that we aren't told about, though we mustn't be dogmatic about it. By the way, Haran would be in Syria.

--- We will find out in a little while that this servant is going to be sent up to brother Nahor's family in Haran; so what place is Abraham referring to when he says the servant is to go into Abraham's country? ** Haran

--- And, in that land, from among whom is the servant to get a wife for Isaac? ** from among Abraham's relatives who are living there, Nahor's descendants

=== I know that must seem like a lot of thinking to do about 4 little verses, but there was a lot there to get straight, wasn't there?!

*-- Gen. 24:5 What worry did the servant have? ** that if he did find a suitable girl that she

wouldn't want to leave her family and go so far away with him

--- What did the servant want to know if he should do in that case? ** should he come back and get Isaac and have Isaac go with him back there

*-- Gen. 24:6-7 Did Abraham want the servant to take Isaac back there? ** absolutely not

=== In our own language it might be, "Don't you dare!"

--- Are we told why Abraham didn't want Isaac to go there? ** no

--- What reasons might you think of that might be why he would say this, though? ** (1) he wouldn't want Isaac to make the dangerous journey; (2) he's afraid Isaac might settle up there and he wouldn't see him again; or (3) a more godly reason is that he knew that he himself had been called away from Haran into the land of Canaan and had been promised for himself and his seed, therefore Isaac shouldn't go back up there but should stay in Canaan

--- How did Abraham say that the servant would be able to find Isaac's bride, v. 7? ** God would show him

--- How does Abraham designate that he's not speaking of just some local false god, but of the real God? ** says this is the God who had called him from his relatives to this land and had actually spoken to him and promised him this land

*-- Gen. 24:8-9 And what does he say that the servant is to do if the girl won't come with him? ** he doesn't have to do anything more; he has done his duty in just going and asking

--- How about taking Isaac up there to try to coax the girl? ** absolutely not

___ So what did the servant do then? ** went ahead and made the oath

--- How? ** by putting his hand under Abraham's thigh and swearing to do as he had said

*-- Gen. 24:10 Did the servant just hop on a horse and go? ** no, he took 10 camels

--- What does that tell us about Abraham's herds? ** that he had more than 10 camels! ("from among the camels...")

--- What does this tell us about the trip? ** there was something to ride on, so they probably weren't walking all that way; there were pack animals; and the servant certainly didn't go by himself!

=== We'll be told later that he had men with him, but we could certainly infer it from this.

--- Did he take much with him other than camels? ** yes, it sounds like he took a lot of Abraham's things

--- What might we suppose would be among those things? ** not only food for the journey, but gifts as well

=== We'll find out for sure later that there were gifts.

--- Where did he go? ** to the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia

--- Who was Nahor? ** Abraham's brother

=== This could be like calling Escondido "the Newheiser's town". We find out later that this is the city named Haran, where Abraham had lived after leaving Ur.

=== This makes the journey sound as if the servant just got his camels together, took off, and got there very quickly. But this was a trip of about 450 miles. Camels in convoy travel at about 2½ miles per hour. If they were to travel 10 hours a day, that would be 25 miles a day, or about 3 weeks. But my guess would be that the trip probably took a month at the very least.

*-- Gen. 24:11 Did he just go right up and go into the city? ** no, he stopped outside the city

--- Where outside of the city? ** by the well

--- What about the camels? ** he made them kneel down

=== I read that camels were taught at an early age to kneel down. I guess that isn't their normal stance for resting. However, this way the packs on their backs would be more accessible and anyone riding on them could get down more easily. After all, a camel's back is pretty high up!

--- What time of the day did he get to the city of Nahor? ** in the evening

--- What household duty was done at that time? ** water was drawn for the household for the night

--- Where did they get the water? ** from the village well

=== So each house didn't have its own well. My uncle told me that when he was a boy in the early 1900s in Illinois, before going to school in the morning, he used to go into town and get water from the community pump for my grandfather's studio. And this was only about 95 years ago.

=== I find it interesting that the well was outside the city. I would have thought that they would have built the city around the well so they could have water if there were danger and they couldn't leave the city. However, I read that the well would be near the city but not too near because of the noise and dust and commotion associated with drawing water and watering flocks.

--- Whose job was it to get the water from the well? ** the women's

*-- Gen. 24:12 What does this trusted servant do after stopping by the well and having the camels kneel? ** he prayed to God

--- In what interesting way does he address God? ** he speaks of him as the Lord God of his master

=== I don't know if that were just the way of speaking or if it might have indicated that the man weren't a true believer himself. But later in this chapter it certainly sounds as if he were a believer. Perhaps this was just a humble way of speaking, putting his master first. But I don't know.

--- What does he ask for Abraham? ** that God would show Abraham kindness

--- And how would that kindness of God affect the servant? ** he would have success in what he'd come so far for

--- And what was that? ** to find a bride for Isaac

*-- Gen. 24:13-14 What does the servant point out to God? ** that he's there standing by the well and it was the time of day when the women came out to get water

--- What, in just a few words, was the gist of his prayer? ** basically it boils down to that God would show him the right the girl

--- How did he propose to find this right girl? ** it seems by asking the various young women for a drink, and then the right one would give it to him and offer to water his camels, also

=== It would be quite a job just to water 1 camel -- but 10...!

--- What could we know about any girl who offered to water 10 camels? ** she was kind, generous, thoughtful of others, a hard worker, strong, and healthy

--- From the wording here, does drawing water seem to have been the job of the female head of the house? ** no, it was a simple job that any women with a little strength could do; in fact, it speaks of young women or girls here

=== Do any of you remember the Disney movie, "Jungle Book"? Remember, the little girl going out and getting water and singing about drawing water until she is grown and has a daughter of her own who will then draw the water?

*-- Gen. 24:15-16 How quickly did God answer this prayer? ** before the servant had even finished praying

--- Who came out to the well? ** Rebekah

--- And who was Rebekah? ** the granddaughter of Nahor, Abraham's brother

--- What do we learn about Rebekah here? ** that she was pretty and a virgin

=== Remember, she was at least the half-great-niece of the beautiful Sarah.

--- And what did Rebekah do? ** she went to the well and filled her pitcher

--- It says and "then she came up"; what does that seem to indicate? ** there are 2 basic types of wells as far as I know: (1) where a hole is dug, perhaps lined to keep dirt from falling in, and you stand at the top and let your bucket down in by a rope and then pull the bucket up, and (2) where the dirt is dug out at a slant until you get to the water (like a tiny lake at the bottom of a tiny valley); then they often made steps leading down to the surface of the water. At least you had to go down to the water and then come back up "out of" the well.

*-- Gen. 24:17-18 Did the servant seem to have any hesitation in approaching Rebekah? ** it doesn't seem so

--- Why do you say that?** because he ran to meet her

--- What did he ask for? ** a drink from the vessel she had just filled

--- Was she hesitant to give water to this stranger? ** no, she quickly gave it to him

--- How did she give it to him? ** took the vessel down from where she was carrying it, balancing it on the palm of her hand, and let him drink

=== It would be easier to carry something up on your shoulder (or in many places, on your head) or a back pack or on your hip rather than letting it hang from your hand. Also, the position of the handle might cause the water to spill if you held it by the handle.

*-- Gen. 24:19-20 Then what did she say? ** that she would also water his camels

--- How much water would she give them? ** as much water as they wanted

--- Did she? ** yes

--- How did the camels get at the water to drink it? ** she put it in a trough that was there for animals to drink out of

--- Did she just walk back and forth and conserve her energy? ** no, she ran

=== I have no idea how big her pitcher was. My guess would be about 2 gallons; after all, she was going to have to take enough water home for the family for the evening. According to one book, a camel if water is readily available will drink 5 - 9 gallons of water a day. I don't know how much more after a long trip. But let's just use a few figures here to get a general idea of what kind of job Rebekah had let herself in for. Let's say a 2 gallon pitcher and 10 gallons for each camel. That would involve 5 trips up and down the well for one camel -- times 10 camels would be 50 round trips up and down the well! I think we can safely say that she made at the very least 30 trips to the well, probably more like 70. But at least that gives us a little idea -- she didn't just go up and down the well a couple of times! And my guess would be that it took her anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes to do it! Just you try running up and down steps with a 15 or so pound weight for half an hour or more!

*-- Gen. 24:21-22 What was Abraham's servant doing while all of this was going on? ** watching her

--- Why? ** to see if she would finish the job and therefore be the one that would fulfill the purpose of his journey

--- Who, in his mind, would actually make his journey successful? ** the Lord

=== So it sounds as if he's waiting to see if the Lord is going to answer his prayer or not.

--- Did he talk to her as she ran back and forth with the water? ** no

--- What did he do after she had finished watering his camels? ** he put a golden nose ring and 2 golden bracelets on her

=== We might think from this verse that he just handed them to her, but v. 47 indicates that he may actually have put them on her. But I'm not sure how you'd put a nose ring on someone else!

=== As near as I can figure, the nose ring weighed 1/4 ounce and the bracelets 4½ ounces. I think that is the total weight on the bracelets, not each one, but I'm not sure.

--- Are we told what Rebekah thought of this gift? ** no

*-- Gen. 24:23-25 What did he say to her then? ** he asked her 2 things: (1) whose daughter she was, and (2) was there room for him and his entourage to stay at her father's house

=== We see here for sure that he wasn't traveling alone, don't we? "...for us to stay...".

--- Who did Rebekah say she was? ** the daughter of Bethuel and the granddaughter of Nahor and Milcah

--- Interestingly, why would she have bothered mentioning her grandmother's name; why not just say she was Nahor's granddaughter? ** because we found back in 22:24 that Nahor had had a concubine as well, so Rebekah is saying that she's the granddaughter of the real wife of Nahor, not just of some concubine

--- Did she say there was enough room for him? ** yes, both room for them and the camels and enough food for the camels

=== I find it interesting that this girl could offer hospitality without consulting anyone. Perhaps this was their custom, to take in any strangers, but we aren't told that.

*-- Gen. 24:26-27 What was the servant's immediate response to Rebekah's answer? ** worship and thanksgiving to God

=== We aren't told exactly, but to me it sounds as if he were probably praying out loud.

--- For what was he thankful? ** for the Lord's mercy to Abraham in leading the servant right to Abraham's relatives

--- And from this, if he were actually praying out loud, what did Rebekah know? ** that this man was a worshipper of the Lord God and that he was from the household of Abraham, a relative of her family

--- We aren't told here, but do you imagine she had ever heard of Abraham? ** my guess would be that she had

=== After all, we tell our children about big happenings in our families, and moving from Ur would have been a big happening, as well as when Abraham left with their nephew Lot. She's probably heard the story many times. Also, I'm wondering if there were some sort of communication between Nahor up in Syria and Abraham down in Canaan.

--- After all, what had Abraham heard back in 22:20-24? ** news of his brother Nahor's sons and that he had a granddaughter named Rebekah

--- Were we told how Abraham happened to hear that? ** no

=== So even though it was a long ways a way, evidently there was some sort of communication between them, though probably very limited. After all, it was about 450 miles in the days before cars, etc.

*-- Gen. 24:28 Let's get the picture. Rebekah had gone out to get the water for the evening. She went up to the well and filled her pitcher, when a stranger with 10 camels and who knows how many servants stops her and asks for a drink of water. Being a hospitable girl, she gives him a drink and offers to water his camels as well. After running up and down the well for up to ½ hour or so, she has finished. I'm sure she expected some thanks. But the man comes up to her, gives her a beautiful golden nose ring and 2 heavy golden bracelets and asks her who she is and can they spend the night. After telling him who she is and "yes, they can stay", he starts praying and talking about Abraham, a relative!

--- So what does this girl do? ** she ran home and told her family about it

--- Who, specifically, does it say that she told? ** those of her mother's house

=== I don't know whether that has any special meaning. It just might mean her family. Or maybe he was a bigamist, and she told only her mother, not the other wives.

*-- Gen. 24:29-31 What person do we find out is part of her "mother's house"? ** her brother Laban

--- What did Laban do? ** ran out to the well and invited this stranger home

--- So where were Abraham's servant and camels as Rebekah ran home and told her family about all of this? ** left standing at the well!

--- What prompted Laban to go out to Abraham's servant? ** Laban heard Rebekah's story and saw the expensive gifts given to her

=== Some people say that greed prompted Laban, and from what we later learn about Laban, that might have been. However, this man had spoken of Abraham and that this was the house of Abraham's relatives. So Laban could have run out there, I think, just because here was an ambassador from long-gone family. The gifts would have shown, besides wealth, that the man was serious about something in coming there, not just some idler happening to pass through the town.

--- How did Laban address the man; what title, so to speak, did he use? ** called him blessed of the Lord

=== So we know that the true God was at least still remembered back up in Haran, though we don't know if the people were true believers.

--- What did Laban tell the servant to do? ** to come in

--- What did Laban say he had? ** the house ready for the servant and a place for the camels

*-- Gen. 24:32-33 Did Abraham's servant accept Laban's invitation? ** yes

--- Again, how do we know, other than by common sense, that this trusted servant of Abraham's hadn't traveled alone? ** it speaks of the men who were with him.

--- What kind of hospitality does Laban show? ** very good; he evidently took care of the camels himself (or at least had it done), gave them water to wash up with, and gave them a meal

--- I'll bet they were hungry after their long journey, but did they just pitch right in and eat? ** no, or at least the head servant didn't

=== We find out a little later that the other men didn't eat yet, either.

--- Why doesn't he eat right away? ** he had come there on certain business, so he wants to get right down to it immediately

=== We're not going to go in these next verses in detail, because they are just a repetition of what we just got through reading. But we will read them, taking a few verses at a time. That way everyone gets a turn to read, and it's easier for us to listen.

*-- Gen. 24:34-35 The servant starts right in at the beginning; who does he say that he is? ** Abraham's servant

--- What does the servant say about Abraham's financial situation? ** that he is very rich

--- What reason does he give for the wealth? ** God

*-- Gen. 24:36-38 He doesn't beat around the bush, does he; what is he stating as the reason for his visit? ** to get a wife for his master's son from among relatives

--- What one detail does he give about Isaac, v. 36? ** that the wealthy Abraham had given Isaac all of his riches

--- We aren't told, but why might he have mentioned this little detail? ** it would certainly get Laban's attention and would make the family more favorable to his request

*-- Gen. 24:39-41 Who did the servant tell them that Abraham had said would guide the servant on this quest for a bride for Isaac? ** the Lord and His angel

=== I think that is giving credit where credit it due and also showing what kind of religion they could expect from Isaac.

--- What 2 things does he mention that would clear him of the promise that he gave to Abraham?

** (1) if he gets there and gets a wife for Isaac, or (2) if he gets there, asks, and they refuse to let her go

*-- Gen. 24:42-44 So now the servant tells of how he acted when he reached the well of their city.

--- Who does the servant keep bringing in as a big part of the story? ** God and what God does

*-- Gen. 24:45-46 How soon did an answer come to his prayer? ** before he'd finished speaking

--- Whose generosity and industry is made known here? ** Rebekah's in her volunteering to water the camels

*-- Gen. 24:47-49 The NIV has spoken of a nose ring all along, but the KJV has been speaking about an earring. This is where the KJ has some interesting wording that would let the reader wonder about the earring. Where does it say that the servant put the "earring"? ** "on her face"

=== When I was a girl, that made me wonder until someone told me that it was a nose ring, not an ear ring.

--- Again, Who does the servant bring up very clearly in v. 48? ** the Lord

--- So, after telling his story, what does the servant finally ask (in a rather round about way)? ** if they have a bride he can take back for Abraham's son or not, so that he can know what to do next

*-- Gen 24:50-51 Who enters the picture for the first time here? ** the father, Bethuel

--- Who else is in on the decision? ** Laban, the brother

=== It sounds to me as if Laban held quite a responsible position in the family.

--- Who do they say is responsible for what is happening? ** the Lord

--- What do they say they would be doing if they refused to give the servant a wife for Isaac? ** going against the Lord

--- Who does not seem to be in on the decision? ** Rebekah

=== Of course, for all we know, she may have been jumping up and down and clapping her hands! Or she may have been in the other room while the men talked. We aren't given all of the details at all. It may not be that she was left out of the decision making at all, but we just aren't told.

*-- Gen. 24:52-53 How does the servant respond to their answer? ** by bowing down and worshipping God

--- Then what does he do? ** gives out presents

--- What kind of presents? ** silver and gold things and beautiful clothes

--- To whom did he give these? ** to Rebekah, Laban, and their mother

=== Again the father doesn't enter into the picture. One can't help but wonder why he doesn't appear more. The only time he is mentioned is when he and Laban say Rebekah can marry Isaac.

=== By the way, these would have been not only just presents to be nice, but they were a sign that the bargain was sealed.

*-- Gen. 54-56 So now that the business is taken care of, what do they do? ** eat dinner

--- Who eats? ** the servant and the men with him

--- What happens the next morning? ** the servant wants to get started right away on his return trip

--- Who objects? ** the brother and mother

--- What do they want? ** at least 10 days before they leave

=== To me that would make sense. They could get stuff ready for her to leave and have going away parties, and just get ready never to see her again.

--- But what does the servant say about that? ** no, now that God had let him take care of everything so well, he wanted to get back to Abraham

=== Remember, he's been gone at least a month, and he may be worried that Abraham will be fretting. But to me, it just sounds like a man! OK, the business is taken care of, let's go, never mind farewells and showers and fancy stuff! But we aren't told what he was thinking, so I shouldn't be hard on him!

*-- Gen. 24:57-58 How did they decide what to do? ** they finally consulted the person most personally involved -- Rebekah!

--- Had she evidently been with them at this time? ** no, they called for her

--- What does she say? ** that she'll go now

*-- Gen. 24:59-61 So they left; who went with them besides Rebekah? ** Rebekah's nurse and some female servants

=== We aren't told how many "damsels" (KJ) she took with her, but the word is plural, so we know that it was more than 2. She may have had several girls with her. Remember, in the history books or historical novels when we would read about such and such a princess leaving Germany or wherever and going to Russia or wherever to marry the prince (usually for political reasons!), they would take their ladies-in-waiting with them. That way they would have their "girl friends" and people from home and people she knew and could trust.

=== According to my book on Bible Customs and Manners, in those places a nurse was an extremely important person. The nurse was almost like a parent, I guess like we would think of a life-long nanny now. She had raised Rebekah and loved her and cared for her well being. Now she is going off with her and it will be almost like Rebekah was taking her mother with her. Rebekah will have someone whom she loves and trusts and can confide in and who will be wholeheartedly on Rebekah's side and will give her good advise and comfort her.

=== We will run into this woman one more time, 11 chapters from here, about 120 years from this time. She will be mentioned in one verse, the fact that she died, and that will be all we will ever hear about her. Though when she is mentioned there we are told her name.

--- Does anyone remember her name (Gen. 35:8)? ** Deborah

--- What blessing did Rebekah's family give her as she left them forever? ** that she would have countless descendants who would be victorious over their enemies

=== Interesting that their blessing didn't include wishes for Rebekah's happiness or that type of thing.

--- Did all of these women have to walk all the way back to where Abraham lived? ** no, they rode on the camels

=== And so they started on their journey. I can't help but think that Rebekah must have been quite a girl to enter on such an adventure so willingly! Of course, we don't know what her home life had been like.

*-- Gen. 24:62-63 Now who enters the picture for the first time in this whole chapter? ** Isaac

--- And what role is he playing in this story? ** he's the bridegroom

--- Where is he living? ** Lahairoi in the south

=== This is way down south, near the river of Egypt. We aren't told if this is part of Philistia or Canaan, though Abraham hadn't wanted Isaac to marry "a Canaanite among whom I dwell", so I would guess Canaan.

--- Where have we heard of this place before under the name of Beerlahairoi (16:14)? ** it's evidently the well where Hagar had stopped when she was pregnant and running away from Sarah and the Lord had talked to her and sent her back with promises concerning Ishmael; Hagar had named it that -- "The well of Him that lives and sees me"

=== Remember, we said earlier that "beer" means an artificial well, as opposed to a natural spring. Not that I seen any significance to this, but I do think it's interesting.

--- So Isaac is living there at Lahairoi; as the scene opens, what time of day is it? ** evening

--- What is Isaac doing? ** meditating out in the field

--- Are we told what he's meditating about? ** no

=== So let's not speculate on that, as tempting as it might be to do so!

--- As he's deeply thinking, he looks up, and what does he see? ** the caravan of camels coming

=== My guess is that he recognized them as his father's camels that the servant had taken with him to get a bride for him. It would have been a good 2 months that they had been gone.

*-- Gen. 24:64-65 Over with the camels, who "lifts up the eyes and sees" this time? ** Rebekah

=== According to my book, that expression "lift up the eyes" doesn't have to mean that the person actually looks upward. It means more to look directly and intently at something. So Isaac had seen the caravan and had looked intently at it, and now Rebekah sees this man coming and is looking intently at him. She actually couldn't very well be in reality looking up at him as she is on a camel and he on foot!

--- As Rebekah is looking at Isaac, what is he doing? ** coming across the field to meet the caravan

--- How does she know who this man is? ** she asked Abraham's servant and he told her

--- Why did she want to know? ** let's face it! Here she's been traveling a month or so to go meet her new husband! Naturally she wants to know as soon as she sees him!

--- What did Rebekah do when she found out that this was her future husband coming to meet them? ** she put on her veil and got off the camel

=== Now, according to my customs book again, it wasn't the custom to wear a face veil in Bible times. That came with Mohammed. Sometimes veils were worn, though there are no ancient representations of them, but they were a thinner veil through which the face could be seen. Also, sometimes a woman wore a loose outer garment that could be put up over the head if wanted. This book says that the veiling of the bride is a very ancient custom as a sign of modesty and subjection to her husband. In Rebekah's case, it could have been the natural modesty of a girl who would be meeting her bridegroom for the first time.

=== As for Rebekah's getting off the camel before Isaac got there, according to my book, that was a sign of respect. I guess like when a person stands up when someone comes in the room.

*-- Gen. 24:66-67 What does the servant do when Isaac gets up to them? ** gives him a report

--- By the way, are we given any details as to whether the servant goes and gives Abraham a detailed report? ** no

=== Though I would imagine he did. But the Bible doesn't include all of the details.

--- Are we told what Isaac and Rebekah feel or think as they first see each other? ** no

=== More details that we women would like!

--- But what is Isaac's reaction to Rebekah? ** he loves her and is comforted by her

--- Why did he need comforting? ** because his mother had died

--- Again, glance over at 25:20; how old was Isaac when he married Rebekah? ** 40

--- And how old had he been when his mother died? ** 37

=== So it's been somewhere between just over 2 years and almost 4 years since his mother died, but still he needed female comfort.

--- By the way, are we told Rebekah's age? ** no

--- What is Rebekah's new home? ** Sarah's tent

=== My guess is that this was a special honor and probably the nicest tent in the place.

--- Do we read anything about a special wedding ceremony? ** no

=== That doesn't necessarily mean there wasn't one, though. There could have been a big part. Or perhaps just the fact that she had come to be his bride and that now he is presumably sleeping with her constitutes a marriage. But we aren't given details.

CHARTS

REVIEW:

-- What, in a sentence, is this chapter about? ** getting a bride for Isaac from among his relatives
-- Whose idea was this? ** Abraham's
-- How old was Abraham? ** 140
-- How old was Isaac? ** 40
-- Who is going to do the actual getting of the bride? ** a very trusted servant
-- Where does he go? ** to Haran, up in Syria
-- Who lived there? ** Abraham's brother Nahor had, and now his descendants do
-- About how long did a one-way trip take? ** probably about a month
-- Who was doing the directing of events? ** the Lord
-- How did the servant know when the right girl came along? ** he asked the Lord, who granted his request, that the girl that he asked for water and who then volunteered to water the 10 camels would be the right girl
-- Who was the right girl? ** Rebekah, the granddaughter of Nahor
-- Who is Rebekah's brother? ** Laban
-- How long did they take for a going-away party? ** they didn't; left the next day
-- What was Isaac's reaction to Rebekah? ** he loved her

APPLICATION:

** God works things out.
** We should trust God to work these things out.
** We should consult our parents or other respected people about our choice of spouse.
** We should be hospitable to strangers even if it means work for us.
** We shouldn't ask for signs, but pray and thank the Lord.

Chapter 25:1-11: Death of Abraham

=== Now we come to chapter 25. When we finish this chapter, we will be halfway through Genesis. It probably seems that we have been in Genesis forever, but we really haven't. We are averaging a chapter a week, but we've also spent some time on charts, so we've taken about 30 weeks to do 24 chapters which I think is very good. By this time next year, Lord willing, we should have been long finished with Genesis and well into Exodus.

-- What has happened to Sarah in two chapters before this? ** she's dead and buried

-- What has happened to Isaac in the last chapter? ** he married Rebekah

-- From where did he get his wife? ** from up in Haran (Syria) where Uncle Nahor had stayed

-- How old was Abraham when Isaac got married? ** 140

-- And Isaac? ** 40

-- How about Rebekah? ** we aren't told

*-- Gen. 25:1-4 What does Abraham do, v. 1? ** gets married

=== I think from the chronology and the way it is worded that we can presume that this is some time after Sarah dies. My guess would be that he'd had enough of mixing a wife and concubine! But I don't think we should be dogmatic about that.

--- What was the name of the bride? ** Keturah

=== By the way, the word here for "wife" is "ishshaw" which simply means "woman". It is the same word that's used for Eve!

--- What was Abraham's age? ** we aren't told

--- But, presuming that this takes place after the death of Sarah, at least how old did he have to be? ** at least 137

--- What are we told about Keturah? ** nothing except that she had children

--- How many children does Keturah have, v. 2? ** 6

--- Apparently what sex are these children? ** apparently all male, since usually the Bible indicates if they are female

=== The sons' names are listed in v. 2 and some grandsons and great-grandsons are listed in v. 3-4. There could have been daughters too that just aren't mentioned.

--- Look over the names of the sons in v. 2, do any of them sound familiar to you, that we might run into quite a bit later in the Bible? ** Midian; the Midianites appear quite a bit

--- Look over the names of the grandsons in v. 3-4; do you recognize the name of any of them? ** Sheba; that may be where the Queen of Sheba's land got its name

--- So how many sons, total, does Abraham have? ** 8

*-- Gen. 25:5-6 But with 8 sons, who was Abraham's heir? ** Isaac

--- What did Isaac receive as his inheritance? ** everything that Abraham had

--- What do these verses call Abraham's other wives? ** concubines

--- Why the plural? ** evidently he only took Keturah as a concubine, but don't forget Hagar

--- So was this "wife" that Abraham took in v. 1 a full wife like Sarah had been? ** no

--- What about the other 7 sons of Abraham; don't they get anything from their father? ** yes, he gave them gifts

--- Have we ever heard anything about the gifts to Ishmael? ** no

--- Then how can we say that he ever got any? ** because it says he gave gifts to the sons of the concubines plural

--- Did they get these gifts after Abraham died? ** no, he personally gave them

--- Why might that have been? ** so that there wouldn't be arguing about the inheritance after he died

--- Then after giving his other 7 sons gifts, what did Abraham do? ** sent them away

--- Had Ishmael already been sent away? ** yes

--- When? ** years before when he was mocking little Isaac

=== I think this is specifically talking about Keturah's sons. Perhaps Abraham had had Ishmael there to get gifts too, though we aren't told.

--- When were Keturah's sons sent away? ** sometime before Abraham died

--- Are we given the ages of these 6 sons as they are sent away? ** no

--- Why did he send his own sons away? ** to get them away from Isaac

--- Why would he do such a thing (though we aren't told specifically why)? ** to prevent future trouble. Palace revolutions, etc.

--- Was Abraham just being selfish is giving Isaac most of his things? ** no, God Himself had said that Isaac was the son of promise, even going so far as to speak of Isaac as Abraham's only son

=== Of course, Isaac was the only son of Sarah, the real wife.

--- Where did Abraham send these other sons to? ** eastward from where he and Isaac lived

=== We aren't specifically told this, but there is a lot of reason to believe that they went over and joined their half-brother Ishmael. Later the Bible calls the descendants of Midian as both Midianites and Ishmaelites. So it would seem that these brothers all confederated under their oldest brother Ishmael. He would have been at the very least 50 years older than they.

=== We also aren't told, but I'd think that this all might have caused some resentment among the other 7 brothers. But since we aren't told this specifically, we should be careful in our speculation. Of course, they could have just realized that all of this was the custom and accepted it as such.

*-- Gen. 25:7-8 How old did Abraham live to be? ** 175 years

=== Now, the KJ and NIV here say that he was "full of years," but the NAS here says that he was "satisfied with life." To me those don't mean the same thing. In fact, the "...of years" and "...with life" don't appear in the Hebrew at all; they are added words. It simply reads that Abraham was "full." So I looked up the word in Strong's concordance. It means "to be satiated, either in a pleasant or disagreeable sense." Of course, "satiated" means "full", but full in what sense? To me it seems that the NAS is slightly taking liberties by saying that he was "satisfied with life." But I don't think we need to make a federal case out of this!

--- How old would Isaac have been when his father died? ** 75 years

--- How old would Ishmael have been when his father died? ** 89 years

--- How many years after Sarah died did Abraham die? ** 175 - 137 = 38 years

--- So, again presuming that he married Keturah after the death of Sarah, how many years did Abraham have to have married Keturah, have 6 sons, pretty much raise them, then send them away with gifts? ** 38 years

=== Now let's just take one verse from later in the chapter in order to get a better picture of Abraham's life.

*-- Gen. 25:26 Who is born here? ** Jacob and Esau

--- Who was their father? ** Isaac

--- How old is Isaac when his twin sons are born? ** 60

--- How old did we say that Isaac was when his father Abraham died? ** 75

--- So did Abraham live to see his grandsons by Isaac, the son of promise? ** yes

--- In fact, how many years would Abraham have seen Jacob and Esau as they were growing up? ** 15 years

--- We aren't told, but do you think Abraham might have told them about his various experiences with the Lord and the covenants? ** I would certainly think so!!

=== And think of other things he could have told them! Remember when we looked at the overlapping generations in Genesis 5 and 11 and the chart we made together? If (and it's only "if" because we aren't specifically told this, but it certainly seems very likely to me), if Abraham saw Shem while he was still back in Ur of the Chaldees, Abraham could have had a first hand account of the Flood! And Abraham could have had a third hand account of the Garden of Eden and the Fall and the translation of Enoch! Remember, Adam could have talked with Lamech, the father of Noah. Lamech could have talked with Shem. And Shem could have told these things to Abraham! It would be like your telling your children things that your parents told you that your grandparents had told them. Most of us do that all of the time!

--- Now again we aren't told, so we need to be careful, but do you think there is a possibility that Abraham had been told about the words of the Lord when the Lord told Rebekah that the elder son would serve the younger? ** I would think so

=== This would be a somewhat different situation that Ishmael and Isaac, wouldn't it?

--- How? ** because Ishmael was only the son of a concubine, while Jacob and Esau were twins, grandsons of the full wife Sarah

--- But does that necessarily mean that Abraham (and the others) realized just what this meant, that the promises and blessing were to go through this younger son Jacob? ** I don't necessarily think so

=== But we're sort of getting ahead of ourselves! So let's just add to our chart about the grandsons before we put in that Abraham died.

*-- Gen. 25:9-10 Who saw to the burial of Abraham? ** Isaac and Ishmael

=== It doesn't mention Keturah's 6 sons. Also, it doesn't mention if any grandsons (specifically Jacob and Esau) were present at this funeral. But I don't think that necessarily means they weren't there. Just as in the story of getting a wife for Isaac, it spoke of the servant as if he were by himself, but then later it speaks of "the men".

--- Where did Isaac and Ishmael bury their father? ** the cave of Machpelah

--- Where have we heard of this cave before? ** it's the one that Abraham bought as a burial place for Sarah

--- So who, up to this point are buried in the cave of Machpelah? ** Sarah and Abraham

=== Later Isaac and Rebekah and Jacob and Leah will also be buried there.

--- How much of this land that was promised to him did Abraham own at the time of his death? ** just the cave and the field that the cave was in

CHARTS

*-- Gen. 25:11 How did Isaac fare after his father died? ** very well

--- Why? ** because God blessed him

--- Does it say how specifically that God blessed Isaac? ** no

--- What might it mean? ** I think it probably means that God made Isaac rich and protected him from his enemies

--- Where did Isaac live? ** by the well Lahairoi

--- Where have we heard of this well before? ** it's where Isaac was living when Rebekah came to him as a bride; also where the angel comforted the pregnant Hagar and sent her back to Sarah.

--- "Beer" means "well". Do you remember what "Lahairoi" means as Hagar named it? ** "the well of Him who lives and sees me"

REVIEW:

-- What did Abraham do some time after Sarah died? ** took another wife
-- What was her name? ** Keturah
-- Did Keturah have any children by Abraham? ** yes, 6 sons
-- What is the name of the only one we ever hear much about? ** Midian
-- What did Abraham do about his sons? ** sent all of them away except Isaac
-- Why? ** so they wouldn't cause any trouble for the son of promise
-- How old did Abraham live to be? ** 175
-- Where was he buried? ** in the Cave of Machpelah
-- Who else was there at that time? ** Sarah

APPLICATIONS:

** We should do all we can to prevent trouble among our children. (Though I don't think we should be sending our children away! Isaac was very different!)
** Old age is a blessing from the Lord.
** It's a good idea to prepare for our deaths ahead of time.
** We should make a specific will and maybe give some our things to the people we want to have them before we die.
** We should have things settled regarding our deaths (like buying grave sites) well beforehand.
** We should remember the promises that the Lord makes.

Chapters 25b - 35, Life of Jacob (some details of Isaac's life, ch. 25 - 27)

Chapter 25:12-34: Birth of Jacob; Jacob Gets Birthright from Esau

=== So we have finished with Abraham himself. Now we go on to his sons and grandsons.

*-- Gen. 25:12-16 Whose sons are we going to be looking at first? ** Ishmael's

--- Who are we reminded was Ishmael's mother? ** Hagar

--- What was her position in life according to this verse? ** she was Sarah's handmaid

=== The word manes "slave girl." I find this wording interesting. It doesn't say "Abraham's concubine," but puts her down as the slave of the wife.

--- And what nationality was Hagar? ** Egyptian

--- How many sons did Ishmael have, v. 16? ** 12

--- Do we have any particular reason to believe that these are grandsons and not sons? ** none that I can see, especially in view of the list's starting out "..the first born of Ishmael..."

=== The NAS and NIV even say "...in order of their birth..."

--- Could we have had any idea that he would have 12 sons? ** yes

--- Why, Gen. 17:20? ** Abraham was told that by God back after God had told him that Sarah would have a son and Abraham had longed for the son Ishmael that he already had known and loved for 13 years to "live before God"

--- Are these just run-of-the-mill type sons? ** no, God refers to them as "princes"

=== Or the word can mean a ruler, someone with responsibility. But they aren't just some peasants.

=== By the way, later we hear about a daughter of Ishmael's, so he had at least one daughter.

*-- Gen. 25:17-18 Where did Ishmael's descendants live, v. 18? ** "from Havilah to Shur that is before Egypt as you go toward Assyria"

=== I couldn't find out exactly where this all was, but it seems to be sort of over in the Arabian peninsula.

--- Do any of you remember ever having heard of Havilah before in Genesis? ** yes, it is mentioned when God told the location of the Garden of Eden.

=== Remember, the Bible even says that there was much gold there in Havilah and it was good gold.

--- How old did Ishmael live to be? ** 137 yrs

--- How long had he lived after his father Abraham died? ** 137 - 89 yrs = 68 yrs.

=== And this is the last we hear of Ishmael himself, though we hear of his descendants.

*-- Gen. 25:19-20 Now whose sons are we going to look at? ** Isaac's

=== We looked at this verse earlier, but let's get it here in context. Here is where we find out how long it was between the time that Sarah died and when Isaac was married.

--- How old was Isaac when he married? ** 40 years old

=== Remember, we had earlier seen (23:1) that Sarah was 127 years old when she died.

--- This would have made Isaac how old? ** 37

--- So, again, how long after his mother died did Isaac get married? ** between 2+ and 4- years

=== The Bible often just seemingly casually throws in ages, but it is amazing what we can get from these ages if we just do some digging. I think it gives a more complete picture. But back to this context here. We're looking at the relationship between Isaac and his wife Rebekah.

--- Who was Bethuel? ** son of Abraham's brother Nahor, and father of Rebekah

--- Who was Laban? ** Rebekah's brother

--- So what relationship on the father's side was there between Bethuel and Rebekah and

Abraham? ** Abraham was their uncle and great-uncle respectively on their father's side

--- How about on their mother's side; what was Abraham's relationship to them there? ** their great-uncle and great-great-uncle

=== So Rebekah was doubly related to her husband, wasn't she? Not only a first cousin once removed on her father's side, but also a first cousin twice removed on her mother's side. They were almost as related as first cousins would have been.

=== A interesting little aside. A grandchild has 1/4th (4/16th) of his heredity from each grandparent. Terah with the grandfather of Isaac, so Isaac was "4/16th Terah." But Rebekah was the great-grandchild and the great-great-grandchild of Terah, which made her "3/16th Terah." You can see that there was a lot of duplications in the gene pool! We'll see even more as we get to some of Jacob's children.

--- What nationality does v. 20 say Bethuel and Laban were? ** "Syrian"

--- Where does it say Bethuel was from? ** Padanaram

=== Padanaram means "the field or plain of Aram." It was a large plain that was surrounded by mountains, and the town of Haran was there in this plain. It is located in what was then Syria.

*-- Gen. 25:21-22 What problem did Isaac and Rebekah face? ** infertility

=== We'll find out in just a minute how long they struggled with this problem.

--- What did Isaac do about this problem? ** prayed fervently to God about it

--- Did God listen to Isaac's prayer? ** yes

--- What happened after Rebekah finally got pregnant? ** "the children struggled inside of her"

--- Did Rebekah seem to think this was normal movement during pregnancy? ** evidently not

--- Why do you say that? ** because she asked God about it

=== Any pregnant women can tell you that sometimes babies do a lot of moving. Some babies are more active than others; but some babies really carry on rolling around. So I think it must have been an awful lot of movement.

--- Does it say how she asked God about this? ** no

=== It simply says "she went to inquire of the Lord". I wonder if she just prayed or what. But we just aren't told.

*-- Gen. 25:23 Did God answer her inquiry? ** yes

--- What did he tell her was causing all that commotion in her womb? ** the there were 2 different nations and kinds of people inside her

--- Does it sound as if these 2 nations are going to get along? ** no

=== I guess they were sort of fighting against each other even in the womb.

--- Besides the fact that there were twins who would be very different from each other, what else did God tell Rebekah about her babies? ** that one of the nations descended from her would be stronger than the other; also that the older offspring would serve the younger

--- So, though we aren't told just how, did God evidently actually answer Rebekah, not just give her some sort of "feeling"? ** yes

=== We aren't told whether it was in a dream or through some sort of prophet or actually verbally.

--- We aren't told, but do you think that Rebekah would have told all of this to Isaac? ** probably; I can't see her not doing so!

--- But do we necessarily know that Isaac and Rebekah knew that this meant that the blessing and the birthright and the promises were to go to the younger son? ** I don't necessarily think so, though my son disagrees with me!

--- However, if God told them that the younger would be dominant over the older one, might they perhaps have sort of wondered about who was to get the birthright, blessing, and promises of God, which one would be the child of promise so to speak? ** I think so

=== But I think we need to be careful here. We can go too far either way on this question. We might say, "Oh, they knew, therefore they should have raised them with that idea and let Esau know from the beginning that he would be regarded as the younger son." Or we might say, "Oh, they had no idea at all and should just have stood back and gone ahead and given the blessing and birthright to Esau." I think we need to be careful not to try to read their minds nor to condemn them too quickly in the way they raised their sons and treated them. But, again, we're sort of getting ahead of ourselves!

*-- Gen. 25:24-25 So how many babies did Rebekah have? ** 2

--- Describe the older twin? ** he was red and very hairy

--- What did they name him? ** Esau

=== We aren't told what Esau means, and from the concordance, it doesn't seem to have any sort of significance. I've heard that it means "hairy," though Strong's doesn't say that. It may mean "rough" (as opposed to "smooth" which Jacob later described himself as when he said he didn't have much hair). Which could mean "hairy."

*-- Gen. 25:26 What was significant about the 2nd twin ** he held Esau's heel

--- So what was this 2nd twin named? ** Jacob

--- Do you have a footnote that says what Jacob means? ** "heel catcher", that is "supplanter"

=== A rather prophetic name!

=== The KJ sounds as if he just grabbed Esau's heel, but the NAS and NIV sound as if he were born holding onto Esau's heel. Whichever is the more correct, it evidently was noticeable enough so as to affect his name.

--- How old was Isaac when the twins were born? ** 60 yrs

--- So how many years from the time Rebekah and Isaac were married until they had children? ** 20 yrs

=== Is it any wonder that Isaac was praying for children! He would have known that his parents had to wait until they were 100 and 90 years to have a child, but that would be worrisome.

--- But did he know that he would have children? ** yes

--- How? ** because God had promised Abraham uncountable descendants, and Isaac was the one through whom these descendants were to come

=== Again, just a throwing in of an age here lets us get a more complete picture.

=== Now, I know we already looked at this, but let's get it here again in its context.

--- How old did we say that Abraham lived to be? ** 175

--- So how old was Isaac when Abraham died? ** 75

--- And how old was Isaac when his twin sons were born? ** 60

--- How old would Abraham have been when Isaac was 60? ** 160 years

--- Therefore -- can we know if Abraham lived to see his grandsons Jacob and Esau? ** yes; Abraham didn't die until they were 15 years old

=== So when we had Abraham dying back up in v. 7-8, it's just that God was wrapping up Abraham's life because He wasn't going to record any more events in Abraham's life but was passing on to Isaac and Jacob's lives. It wasn't that Abraham had died before Jacob was born.

=== Another thought I had was I wondered if Abraham suspected that everything would go to Jacob. He had run into a somewhat similar situation with Ishmael.

--- But what was the big difference between the situation with Ishmael and Isaac and that between Jacob and Esau? ** the older son in that case, Ishmael, was only the son of a concubine, whereas Jacob and Esau were twins of the wife

*-- Gen. 25:27 God had told Rebekah that she had 2 different kinds of people in her womb; what did Esau grow up to be? ** a hunter, one who went out into the fields

=== This word often means an open field like where wild animals wander around.

--- What kind of a man was Jacob? ** a "plain" man (KJ)

=== This seems to mean more like a well rounded man. One who could sort of turn his hand at many things.

--- Where did Jacob live? ** in tents

=== That doesn't mean that he was tied to mama's apron strings and just hung around home and did nothing. He would have been home taking charge of the herds and overseeing a lot of things. Not out and away hunting. Also, if he oversaw flocks, he could have moved to different pastures with his tent.

--- What might we compare the 2 brothers to in the early history of our country? ** perhaps like a buffalo hunter and a farmer

--- So were they in themselves literally 2 different kinds of men? ** yes

--- Which do you think might be the more settled, reliable type of person? ** the farmer

=== I'm not saying that there is anything wrong with either type of occupation. I'm just trying to see the personalities of the two men.

*-- Gen 25:28 Did the parents have any favorites? ** yes, Isaac preferred Esau, and Rebekah preferred Jacob

--- Why did Isaac love Esau better? ** because Esau would go hunting and bring home a deer or some other wild game, and Isaac really liked eating it

=== Each parent preferred a different son. Isaac preferred the adventurous Esau.

--- Now, if the father favors one child, what is the natural reaction of the mother? ** often it's to prefer the other child

--- But are we specifically told that this was the reason that Rebekah preferred Jacob? ** no

=== Perhaps it was just that Jacob was a more reliable, helpful man to have around. Or maybe as small children each parent had just gravitated toward the personality of each child.

*-- Gen. 25:29 OK, what was Jacob doing one day? ** boiling up a pot of beans

=== Later it calls them lentils. They were some sort of legume.

=== Pottage was just an easy dish that cooked up into a mush. It was filling and nutritious but very cheap to make. In fact, according to my Bible Customs book, in India pottage is so cheap and common that the term is used in sayings to show that something is all but worthless, like, "Boy! he's trying to get rubies for pottage!" (something for nothing), etc.

--- Was Isaac a rich man or a poor man? ** rich

--- Was he just living there all by himself with his wife and 2 sons, or did he have other people in his household? ** he must have lots of slaves around

--- Why do you say that? ** after all, he had inherited all that his father Abraham had, and Abraham was rich in both herds and slaves

=== Remember, many years before Abraham had had an army of over 300 men who'd been born in his household. If he had an army of that size, think how many other slaves he had! And he acquired more later. Also, it says that after Abraham died, the Lord blessed Isaac. So Isaac must have been extremely wealthy in both herds and slaves.

=== Now, it seems strange to me that here one of the sons of this rich master was out boiling up his own dinner! But I'm wondering if maybe Jacob were out in the far corner with the flocks and rather than take a chuck wagon along or go clear back to the tents, he just was cooking up a batch of beans or lentils. Sort of like taking along a sack lunch. Or maybe he was overseeing the fixing of dinner for a bunch of men who were working for him. But I don't know. Some have even suggested that he knew Esau would be coming that way and be hungry and was sort of lying in wait for him. But we're given no details, so let's be careful not to put word's in the Bible's "mouth."

--- What had Esau been doing at the same time? ** evidently out hunting

--- What was the state of Esau's health? ** he was faint

--- Why? ** from hunger

*-- Gen. 25:30 What does Esau say to his brother? ** give me some of your dinner, because I'm faint with hunger

--- What color were the beans or whatever? ** red

--- What nickname did Esau get from this incident? ** "Edom" or "Red"

--- Why "Red?" ** because the pottage was red

=== So, from now on in the Bible, we will find Esau, the older twin called by 2 different names: either his real name of "Esau" or his nickname of "Red" (Edom)

=== Let's get the picture. Here's Jacob out somewhere fixing his own lunch. Here comes Esau, and he's so hungry that his blood sugar is really acting up.

*-- Gen. 25:31 In your own words, what loving, brotherly reply does Jacob give to his hunter brother? ** "Sure, for a price. I'll sell you some food for your birthright."

=== Remember, this food he was offering to sell was a very cheap food.

=== This birthright was the right that the first born had just because of being the first-born son. The first-born son was given great respect by the household. He was the leader of the children. When his father died, he would be the head of the house, have his father's official authority. He had a special claim to his father's blessing. Some people think he was even destined to be the family "priest", so to speak, after the death of his father. Later, under the law of Moses, the first born son would get twice as much inheritance as the rest of the sons.

=== This birthright could by changed to another son if the father wanted to (as was to be the case with Jacob and his own sons many years later). In a sense, Ishmael was Abraham's firstborn, and he seems to have been the leader of the rest of his brothers except Isaac. In this case here, God had changed who would have the birthright. However, later in the law of Moses, a father could not change the order of to whom the birthright was given. (Deut. 21:15-17)

=== Also, this birthright could be sold by the firstborn, as we are seeing.

--- Is this the way you'd want one of your sons treating another of your sons if he were hungry? ** no!

--- Does this sound to you as if the 2 brothers were extremely "close" to each other? ** not to me; it sounds to me as if there were rivalry between them

*-- Gen. 25:32 What was Esau's reaction when Jacob said he'd sell him some food in return for the Esau's birthright? ** "Since I'm going to die without food, what good is this birthright to me?"

--- Does it seem to you that Esau valued his birthright very highly? ** no, not if he would sell it for a quick dish of beans

--- But let's look at it another way; do you think that Esau really was on the point of death and would die if he didn't have something to eat immediately? ** that just doesn't seem very likely

--- Does Esau's reply sound as if he were actually saying that he would sell the birthright, or does it just sound like an evasive answer? ** to me it sounds rather evasive, but as if he were sort of agreeing

*-- Gen. 25:33-34 Does Jacob seem to have had confidence in Esau's original evasive answer? ** no

--- Why do you say that? ** because he then asked him to swear that he'd really sell the birthright for the food

=== We really have no way of knowing if Esau had a record for giving evasive answers and then going back on them, or if Jacob just weren't a trusting person. But this just doesn't sound to me as if there were a lot of trust and love between them.

--- So did Esau go along with Jacob's unbrotherly plan? ** yes

--- What did Jacob give Esau for his birthright? ** boiled lentils and bread and evidently something to drink

--- What did Esau do after eating? ** got up and went his way, wherever that was, whether more hunting or home or what we aren't told

--- How, according to the Bible, did Esau regard his birthright? ** he despised it, thought very little of it, didn't regard it at as amounting to much, had no value

--- What seems to be Jacob's regard for this same birthright? ** at least he thought highly enough of it to get it from his older brother when he had the chance

=== Of course, one might say that Jacob knew he was to be the dominant one and was just taking care of it himself. But I think we need to be careful there. It sounds more to me like human greed rather than working conscientiously to fulfill God's prophecies.

--- How old were Jacob and Esau at this time? ** we have no way of knowing at all

=== But from later, we know they were somewhere under about 85 years old. Here they could have been teenagers or much older. We just are given no hint of their ages.

--- By the way, does the Bible condemn Jacob for this unbrotherly act? ** no

--- Does it condone it? ** no

=== The Bible simply states the facts, doesn't it?

--- However, does the Bible remain neutral on what Esau did in selling his birthright? ** no

=== To me v. 34 sounds like a reproof. And in Heb. 12:16 it compares Esau's act with fornicators and wicked people.

CHARTS (Isaac's and Jacob's)

REVIEW OF GEN. 25:

-- To me this chapter has 4 different sections. How would you summarize Ch. 25?
(1) Abraham remarries, has 6 more sons, and dies
(2) a list of Ishmael descendants & death
(3) birth of the twins, Jacob & Esau (with God's prophecy about them
(4) Esau's selling of his birthright for a mess of pottage

-- How old did Abraham live to be? ** 175 yrs

-- Did he live to see his grandsons by Isaac, the son of promise? ** yes; they were 15 when he died

-- Were all of Abraham's sons living together at the time of his death? ** no, he'd sent all but Isaac away with gifts

-- How many sons did Ishmael have? ** 12

-- Had we known that earlier? ** yes, God had told Abraham that when Ishmael was 13 years old

-- How old was Isaac when he married? ** 40

-- Did they have children right away? ** no, not for 20 years

-- How old was Isaac when he finally had children? ** 60

-- What did Rebekah know about her children before they were even born? ** (1) that they wouldn't get along, and (2) that the elder would serve the younger

-- What does the name "Jacob" mean? ** heel catcher, that is, supplanter

-- What was the occupation of each twin? ** Esau was a hunter, Jacob was a rancher

-- What incident of their lives are we given details about? ** how Esau despised his birthright, and Jacob took advantage of his hungry brother to buy this same birthright

APPLICATION for this part:

** We should be loving to our siblings, not take advantage of them.
** We shouldn't give up something important for a passing pleasure or need.
** We shouldn't have favorites among our children (or if we do, we shouldn't let anyone know about it!).
** We should highly regard the blessings that the Lord gives us.
** We should be kind.

Chapter 26: Isaac in Philistia

=== Well, let's get the picture here. We finally got Isaac married to Rebekah. Then Abraham married Keturah and had 6 sons by her. Isaac and Rebekah were childless for 20 years and finally had twins, Jacob and Esau, who were born 15 years before Abraham died. Also before Abraham died, Abraham sent Keturah's sons away with presents. Then Abraham died, and Ishmael and Isaac buried him in the Cave of Machpelah with Sarah. We heard that Ishmael had the prophesied 12 sons, too, didn't we. Then somewhere in there Jacob got Esau to sell him his birthright for a mess of pottage. Now we come to a story that might make us wonder at first if we were going back 100 years or thereabouts!

*-- Gen. 26:1 What happened in Canaan where Isaac is living? ** a famine came

--- What does the Bible say it is like? ** the famine in Abraham's time

--- When in Abraham's life had we heard about a famine? ** when he first moved to Canaan

--- Where had Abraham gone because of the famine? ** to Egypt

--- But what did Isaac do about this famine? ** he went to live in Gerar

--- Who was the king of Gerar? ** Abimelech

--- What nationality were Abimelech and his people? ** Philistines

--- Now, where have we heard of Abimelech before? ** he was the king of the Philistines at the time when Abraham moved to Philistia and later when Abimelech and Abraham made a treaty

--- When in Abraham's life did he first go there? ** the year before Isaac was born

--- And what kind of relationship did Abraham seem to have had with Abimelech? ** a good one

=== Remember, Abimelech had treated Abraham with fairness and generosity and had sought a treaty with Abraham that Abraham's descendants would be good to Abimelech's descendants.

=== Abimelech means "royal father" and seems to me to have been a title, sort of like "Pharaoh". I don't see how it could have been the same king as when Abraham was there, because that would have been years before. Of course, we don't know this for sure. Abimelech could have been very young with Abraham and now be a very old man. We just aren't told the details. But anyway we have Isaac in Philistia.

*-- Gen. 26:2 Does it sound as if Isaac were wrong to leave Canaan when a famine came; should he just have trusted in God to have fed him there in Canaan? ** no

--- Why do you say that? ** because God said He'd show him a land to go to

--- So was Isaac really acting on his own by leaving Canaan? ** no

--- What land was Isaac specifically told not to go to? ** Egypt

--- Are we told how God told this to Isaac, whether by dream or what? ** no

*-- Gen. 26:3 How did God say He would treat Isaac while Isaac was in Philistia? ** very well; He'd be with Isaac and bless him

--- Why was God agreeable to having Isaac be in Philistia? ** because it was part of the land that God was going to give to Isaac's descendants

--- What else did God say He would do? ** confirm His oath that He'd made with Abraham

=== The word is translated various ways: "perform," "confirm," "establish." This word is used in different ways, but here it simply means that something that was predicted will inevitably happen and that God is sort of going to re-give this promise to Isaac.

--- To whom had God originally given the promise of this land? ** Abraham

=== So here we have God sort of renewing with Isaac His promise that He's made with Abraham concerning the land, don't we? Remember, it was to go to Abraham and his seed. And Isaac was the son of promise.

*-- Gen. 26:4-5 So God is reaffirming with Isaac the oath that He'd made with Abraham. God

now told Isaac that the land would be given to him and his seed.

--- Is there any of the rest of the covenants that God had made with Abraham that He's specifically "renewing" with Isaac? ** yes, that he'd have unnumbered descendants and that in Isaac's descendants all of the nations of the earth would be blessed

--- Why did God say that He would do all of these things for Isaac? ** because Isaac's father, Abraham, had obeyed God in every way

*-- Gen. 26:6-7 So where is Isaac living? ** in Gerar, the capitol city of the Philistines

--- What did the men of the place wonder about? ** that beautiful woman with Isaac (Rebekah, his wife)

--- What emotion does Isaac feel when they question him about Rebekah? ** fear

--- Why? ** because he was afraid the men would kill him because of her, because she was so beautiful

--- So what did he do about the situation? ** lied and said she was his sister

--- Does that remind you of anything? ** yes, his father on 2 other occasions

--- But had Abraham been telling a full lie when he'd said that Sarah was his sister? ** no, in that she was his half-sister

=== But Abraham had still said this to be deceptive, so in a sense it was a lie, wasn't it? And now Rebekah isn't even a half-sister, was she? She was a first cousin twice removed!

*-- Gen. 26:8-9 What did Abimelech happen to see one day? ** Isaac being affectionate with Rebekah

--- Though the word in Hebrew simply means to laugh or play or even to mock (as Ishmael did to little Isaac), what seems to have been significant with the way that Isaac was treating Rebekah? ** it must have been in a husbandly sort of way

--- How did Abimelech happen to see this? * he looked out of his window

--- Was this right after Isaac got to Gerar? ** no, a long time later, though we don't know if that means weeks or months or years!

--- What did Abimelech do then? ** called Isaac in and asked why he'd lied to him

--- What reply did Isaac give? ** that he was afraid that the people would have killed him to get the beautiful Rebekah

=== To my way of thinking, that doesn't speak too well of the Philistines! But evidently that type of thing happened.

=== So this story is similar to the 2 times with Abraham and Sarah. But I see one big difference between them.

--- When there had been the similar circumstance with Abraham and Sarah, how had Pharaoh and Abimelech found out that Sarah was Abraham's wife? ** God had intervened; in the case of Pharaoh, the Lord had plagued Pharaoh and his household in some way; and in the case with Abimelech, God had actually warned Abimelech in a dream

--- By the way, if we take this story in chronological order with the rest of the life of Isaac (and I see no reason not to), would this be before or after the twins had been born to Rebekah and Isaac? ** after

=== So somewhere in there are two boys or young men or whatever age they were who were the sons of this "brother and sister!"

--- Again, if we take this chronologically, would Abraham still be alive? ** no

--- So then at least how old would the twins have to have been? ** at least 15

=== But we aren't given the ages, as this wasn't important.

*-- Gen. 26:10-11 What evidently was a bad thing in the eyes of the Philistines (v. 10)? ** to sleep with someone else's wife

=== Notice he says "lightly lain with her". So they did have some sort of morality. But I'm wondering if there were another reason as well.

--- What had we said had been Abraham's political relationship with Abimelech (whether the same one or not)? ** they had a treaty that Abraham wouldn't deal falsely with Abimelech and his descendants

=== So I think this may be figured to apply to Abraham's descendants as well. Perhaps Abimelech was thinking of this. But we aren't told this one way or the other.

--- How did Abimelech take care of the problem that someone might sleep with Rebekah or kill Isaac to get her? ** he put out an order that anyone who touched either of them would be killed

=== That got their attention!

*-- Gen. 26:12-14 What did Isaac do in Philistia to support himself and his family? ** farmed and ranched

--- Had Isaac just packed up Rebekah and himself when the famine came and the 2 of them trekked over to Philistia? ** no, he'd brought his flocks and servants, a lot of each

--- Did Isaac's farming prove successful? ** yes

--- How successful? ** he got back a hundredfold

--- Why did he do so well? ** because God was blessing him

--- As he lived in Philistia, did he have to eat up his animals and sell off his slaves in order to survive? ** evidently not; they seem to have increased, too

--- How did the old human nature show itself in the people of the country, end of v. 14? ** the Philistines got jealous of Abraham's prosperity

*-- Gen. 26:15 In what way had this jealousy shown itself? ** by the Philistines' filling up all of Isaac's wells

=== We'll find out just when this happened in the next few verses.

--- Now, Isaac was just a traveler living there for a while, so how did he happen to have wells? ** they were the ones that Abraham had dug back when he'd lived there so long with the Philistines

=== According to my book of Bible customs, digging wells gave title to unoccupied lands. Therefore Isaac had inherited the wells and the surrounding land from his father. In any pasture country, it is extremely serious to stop up a well and is considered a very hostile act, even sometimes a declaration of war. Range wars started that way in our own Old West.

*-- Gen. 26:16-17 As Isaac grew richer and had more herds and servants, how does Abimelech react? ** asks him to leave

--- What reason does Abimelech give for asking him to leave? ** he says Isaac was getting too strong

--- Does Isaac leave the country of Philistia? ** no, he moves over into the valley of Gerar

=== So it seems to me that Abimelech just asks him to leave the immediate area of the capitol city of Gerar where everyone can see his wealth and be actively jealous all the time. It doesn't sound to me as if Abimelech had any real fear of Isaac's strength, or I think he would have asked him to leave Philistia itself. Of course, maybe Abimelech did ask him to leave Philistia, but Isaac with his army and great wealth just left the city and moved out into the back country, so to speak. We aren't given the details.

--- What was Isaac's house like? ** he lived in a tent

=== When you are moving around with herds, it is much more practical to have a "mobile home", isn't it.

*-- Gen. 26:18 When Isaac moved out into the country, what did he have his men do? ** start

opening up Abraham’s wells and digging new wells

--- Why does he want all of these wells? ** for water, of course, for himself and his enormous household and flocks

--- Now we find out just when the Philistines had filled up these wells; when was it? ** after Abraham had died

--- Had Abraham been living there at the time? ** not that we know of

=== Now, we have no way of knowing how soon after Abraham’s death this had been done. Also, in looking at it, it doesn’t look as of Isaac came down to Gerar while Abraham was still alive or that Abraham died there, though I wouldn’t swear to this. Again, taken chronologically, it seems to have been that Isaac went there after Abraham died.

--- Now, we aren’t told, but why might the Philistines have stopped up Abraham’s wells after he died? ** perhaps they figured that Isaac wouldn’t want to come back and claim the land, or perhaps it was simply spite

--- What does this tell us of Isaac’s age when he was living in Philistia because of the famine? ** that he was at least 75 years old

--- How do we come up with that number? ** Isaac was 75 when his father died

--- And again, to get the picture better, had Jacob and Esau been born yet? ** yes, they were at least 15 years old, having been born when Abraham was 160

=== Of course, they could have been quite a bit older, but they had to have been at least 15 years old.

*-- Gen. 26:19 Isaac’s servants are reopening old wells; is Isaac going to try to dig any new wells? ** evidently yes, it seems that the one in the valley was a new one

--- What was different about this well? ** it seems to have been an artisan well, where the water actually sprang up when you hit its level, not just getting down to the water table

--- Why would this be mentioned? ** I think it was probably a superior type of well, springing water being better

--- What does Isaac name these various wells? ** the same names that Abraham had given them

--- Why would anyone name a well? ** so that it could be spoken of without having to describe its location

=== It would give the location a name. How much easier to say, "It’s over by the well of rejoicing" than "you know, it’s over by the well near that one palm tree, not the one by the 5 trees where the kids had the flu, but the one where we had such a good time at the kids’ birthday party."

*-- Gen. 26:20 I think this verse is talking about the artisan well with the "springing water" (KJ)

--- What happened after Isaac got this good well in the valley? ** the Philistine "cowboys" took it over

=== It sounds to me as if they were saying, "Well, maybe your father’s old wells are yours, but this is something new, so it’s ours."

--- Why did the Philistines want the wells? ** for water for their herds, and probably also to claim the land

--- What did Isaac name that valley well? ** Esek

--- Do you have a footnote that says what that means? ** strife, contention, fighting, arguing

*-- Gen. 26:21 Did Isaac get into a knock-down-drag-out fight over the well? ** no, it sounds like he just moved on and dug another well

--- Were they able to find water after they gave the valley well to the Philistines? ** yes, they dug another successful one

--- The verse doesn’t say they found water, so how can we say so? ** the Philistines certainly wouldn't have fought for a dry well!

--- Evidently who ended up with this second new well? ** the Philistines

--- What did Isaac call this second well? ** Sitnah

--- Do you have a footnote that says what that means? ** opposition or accusation

=== This comes from the same Hebrew root as Satan!

*-- Gen. 26:22 Did Isaac give up well-digging then? ** no, he moved and dug a third well

--- And what happened this time with the Philistines? ** nothing

=== It sounds like the Philistines now had enough wells for themselves. One wonders why they hadn't dug these wells themselves years before!

--- So what does Isaac name this 3rd well? ** Rehoboth

=== This is the plural of a word that is used for broad places, and sort of means like "room enough"

--- Why did he name it that? ** because there was now room enough for himself and his herds "on the range" and he could get down to serious ranching

--- Who does Isaac hold responsible for having made enough room for him? ** God; he recognizes God's care of him

*-- Gen. 26:23 Where did Isaac move? ** to Beersheba

--- Are we told how long this was after the wells situation? ** no

=== It could have been days, weeks, months, or years.

--- Where have we heard of Beersheba before? ** at the end of chapter 21, when Abimelech and Abraham had made a treaty about being good to descendants and that that well was Abraham's

--- Who had named Beersheba and why? ** Abraham had named it "the well of the oath (or sevens)" because that was the place where he and Abimelech had made an oath together and he had given the 7 ewes as a sign of it

*-- Gen. 26:24 What happened to Isaac immediately after moving to Beersheba? ** the Lord came to him that night

--- How did the Lord identify Himself? ** as the God of his father Abraham

--- How did God open his message to Isaac? ** by telling him not to be afraid

--- What reason might Isaac have for fear? ** well, the Philistines weren't being very friendly, and he might have been worried what was going to happen next; also it might be frightening to have God come and speak to him

=== Remember how angels always seem to open their messages to people by telling them, "Fear not!"

--- Why shouldn't Isaac be afraid, according to God? ** because God would be with Isaac and bless him

--- God had said He would bless Isaac; what specific blessing does God mention? ** lots of descendants

--- How many descendants did Isaac have at this time? ** 2

--- According to God, why was God going to bless Isaac? ** because of Abraham

--- Why might that be? ** because the Lord had already made this promise to Abraham and said the promise was to go through Isaac

*-- Gen. 26:25 What was the first thing that Isaac did after God's visit? ** built an altar and worshipped the Lord

--- Then what did he do? ** then he settled down there and dug another well

--- By the way, did Isaac personally do the digging? ** no, his servants did

=== It sounds like perhaps Isaac had just been moving and had chanced to camp at Beersheba that night. Now he decides to stay there and not move on in the morning. But that is just a "perhaps."

--- And what had we said before that digging a well did for a person? ** that person was laying claim to that land

*-- Gen. 26:26-27 Who comes to visit Isaac? ** King Abimelech, one of his friends named Ahuzzath, and General Phichol

--- Have we ever heard the name Phichol before (21:22)? ** yes, that was the name of the general when Abraham and Abimelech had made the treaty about being good to Abimelech's descendants and that a certain well was Abraham's

--- Which well? ** the very one by which Isaac is now camped

=== Again, it doesn't seem to me that this would have been the same General Phichol who had come to see Abraham, because it would have been quite some years before. It seems to have been before God tested Abraham by telling him to offer Isaac. But I wouldn't be dogmatic about this. Perhaps Phichol was very young at the time of Abraham and now very old. Again, we just aren't given the details. And they aren't important. What is important (and what we're told for sure!) is that the king of Gerar and 2 of his men came to see Isaac. So let's just leave it at that.

--- What is Isaac's reaction to this visit? ** very negative; he asks them why they've come since they hated him and had sent him away from them

*-- Gen.26:28-29 What does Abimelech want out of this visit? ** a promise from Isaac

--- Why? ** because Abimelech had seen that God was with Isaac

--- What kind of promise do they want from Isaac? ** that Isaac won't try to hurt them at all

--- Why might Abimelech think that Isaac might try to hurt him? ** well, he could see that Isaac not only was very strong (remember, that's why he'd asked him to leave in the first place!) but that God had a special interest in Isaac

=== It's always good to be on the winning side!

--- Why does Abimelech seem to think that he deserves such a promise from Isaac? ** because they hadn't hurt Isaac or Rebekah in any way and had treated them well, and when he had sent them away, it had been peaceably done

*-- Gen.26:30-31 How did Isaac treat the king and his friend and his general in v. 30? ** fixed them a feast

=== My customs book says that covenants often were accompanied by a festive meal. It was part of the ceremony.

--- Did they make the oath together? ** yes

--- When? ** the next morning

=== So Abimelech felt safe enough to spend the night there.

--- What did they do then? ** Abimelech and his friend and Phichol left

--- What kind of a parting was it? ** peaceful

*-- Gen. 26:32-33 What else happened the day that Abimelech and Phichol made the oath with Isaac and left? ** Isaac's well-diggers found water in the well they were digging

--- What name did Isaac give that well? ** Shebah -- an oath

--- Eventually a city grew up around that well; what became the name of that city? ** "Well of an oath" or Beersheba

--- Have we ever heard of Beersheba before? ** yes, that is where Abraham and Abimelech made a covenant many years before (ch. 21)

=== To me it sounds as if Isaac were reopening Abraham's old well there rather than digging a new one, but I'm not sure.

--- Why would a city grow up around a well? ** because there would be a water supply

=== There are certain places that usually result eventually in having a city grow up around them. A well in a dry country would be one such place. A cross roads is another, or a good bay where ships could come in, or the spot on a river that is the farthest that boat travel can go. These are all natural places for people to settle down. The city might start with a store at a handy place for business, such as the cross roads; or it might start with some families settling near a good water supply. That is the way it happened in our country, too.
*-- Gen. 26:34-35 And now who does the story switch to in these 2 verses? ** Esau
--- What does it say that Esau did? ** got married -- twice
--- How old was he? ** 40
--- Who else do we know who was 40 when he married? ** Esau's father Isaac
--- What kind of women did Esau marry? ** 2 Hittite women
--- How did they get along with their parents-in-law? ** evidently not well, since it speaks of the women as a grief of mind to them
=== I find it interesting that Isaac, as the son of promise, was not to marry a woman from the surrounding country but was to marry a relative. And now here Esau, the older son, marries 2 Hittites. I don't make any conclusions from this, but I do find it interesting.

REVIEW:

-- Where does this chapter take place? ** Philistia
-- Who was the king there? ** Abimelech
-- Why did they go to Philistia? ** famine in Canaan
-- Was this all right by God? ** yes, in fact He showed them where to go
-- What deception took place and why? ** Isaac feared for his life because of his beautiful wife, so said Rebekah was his sister
-- How did Abimelech find out Rebekah wasn't his sister? ** he saw them being intimate together in some way
-- How did Isaac do financially? ** very well
-- Why did Isaac leave the capitol city of Gerar? ** jealousy of Isaac and fear of the strength of his household
-- What difficulties arose after he left Gerar? ** he had to unplug all of Abraham's wells, and then when he dug his own, the Philistine herdsmen would take them away
-- Was this before or after the birth of Jacob and Esau? ** after, since the wells were filled after the death of Abraham which happened when Isaac was 75
-- Who appeared to Isaac one night with words of encouragement? ** God
-- What did the Lord say He'd do for Isaac? ** bless him and give him many descendants
-- Why would the Lord do this? ** because of Abraham, Isaac's father
-- Who wanted a treaty with Isaac? ** Abimelech, the King of Philistia
-- Where did this treaty take place? ** at Beersheba
-- And what does this remind us of? ** the same thing that had happened with Abraham and Abimelech at the same place
-- Who gets married in this chapter? ** Esau
-- What kind of wives did he have? ** 2 Hittite women who were a grief of mind to his parents

APPLICATIONS:

** God may be good to our children because of our faithfulness, so it behooves us to be faithful and obedient.
** God always remembers His promises.
** A lie very often is uncovered!
** If God favors someone, it might be a good idea for us to be friends with them. (Abimelech and Isaac)
** Sometimes it is better to give up our "rights" and live at peace with our neighbors. (Isaac and the wells)
** Be careful about marry someone who will be a "grief of mind" to your family.
** Don't marry non-Christians.

Chapter 27: Jacob deceives Isaac and gets Esau's blessing

-- How old was Isaac when he married Rebekah? ** 40
-- How old was he when his twins were born? ** 60
-- What one event, beside their birth, have we read about Jacob and Esau? ** Esau's selling his birthright for a bowl of pottage
-- Where did Esau and Jacob probably go with their father in the last chapter? ** there was a famine, and the family went to Philistia; it is presumed that the twins went along, though it isn't mentioned
-- Were we told their ages at that time? ** no
=== In fact, they weren't even mentioned, were they?
=== But now we come to about 8 chapters that deal almost exclusively with Jacob, though both Esau and Isaac are alive during all of them. But Jacob is the main character, so to speak. This next chapter is a long chapter, so we may not get through it in one week.
*-- Gen. 27:1 What is the physical condition of Isaac? ** he's old and blind
=== One might suspect cataracts, which are often associated with old age, but it makes no difference to the story. We know that he can't see.
=== I'm not going to go into how I figured this right now, but by figuring backwards from the age Isaac was when he died and the various ages that are given at various times for Jacob during Jacob's lifetime, Isaac was now about 137 years old. We'll get more into this later.
--- About how old would that make Esau and Jacob? ** 137 - 60 = 77 years
=== All right. We have the background. Now for the story!
--- So who did Isaac call to him? ** Esau
*-- Gen. 27:2 What event in his life is Isaac preparing for? ** his death
=== None of us know when we will die, but when we get old, it becomes more of a certainty of the near future, doesn't it! Now, we know from later in the Bible that Isaac lived for about 43 more years. But he had no way of knowing that here, any more than we have of knowing when we will die.
=== Also maybe he was sick at the time or feeling poorly, so he thought that he'd die soon. But we aren't told that, so let's be careful not to read into the Bible things that it doesn't say.
--- And what position was Esau in the family? ** the older son
--- And what does Isaac tell Esau? ** that he's old and doesn't know when he will die
*-- Gen. 27:3-4 In preparation for his death, what does Isaac decide to do? ** give a blessing to Esau
=== I think we can safely say from what happens later, that this is the special blessing that is reserved for the first born son. Presumably this would also be the continuation of the blessing that God had given first to Abraham and then to Isaac.
--- What preparations does Isaac want for this ceremonial and serious blessing? ** that Esau go hunting, get wild game and fix the special meat that Isaac liked so well
=== This word means a delicacy of some sort.
--- What weapons would Esau be using? ** bow and arrows
=== I'd never thought about it before, but that would be the sensible weapon.
=== Now it may have been part of the ceremony to have a meal when giving the blessing. Remember that a meal was customarily part of the ceremony when making a covenant in those times. So it isn't that Isaac is just hungry.
--- Now, back at the time of Rebekah's pregnancy, God had told Rebekah something about the future of the twins; what had that been? ** that the older son would serve the younger son

--- Do we have, by the way, any way of knowing whether or not Isaac knew about Esau's selling his birthright for a bowl of pottage? ** no

=== Now, in light of the prophecy, we really can't say for sure just what Isaac should have done about this special blessing. Should he have given the blessing to Jacob in the first place? Should he have been telling Esau all of his life that he was to remember that Jacob was to have the first place? Or was it just that God was predicting that, no matter was Isaac did, it would end up with the younger son having the place of the firstborn? I don't think we can know with what the Bible tells us, so let's not either condemn or condone Isaac for planning on giving the blessing to Esau, his firstborn. Though I do think we might condemn the sneakiness that comes next! God can carry out His plans without our resorting to lies and deceit! But God often uses man's deceitful nature to carry out his plans!

*-- Gen. 27:5 Who heard Isaac when he was laying his plans for the blessing with Esau? ** Rebekah

--- Are we told how Rebekah happened to hear this conversation? ** no

--- What does Esau do after his father spoke to him? ** he obeyed his father and went out hunting

*-- Gen. 27:6-7 Who does Rebekah tell about Isaac's plan? ** Jacob

--- Which son did Isaac prefer? ** Esau

--- Which son did Rebekah prefer? ** Jacob

--- I imagine that these preferences had been going on throughout most of the lives of the boys. But looking back at Gen. 26:34-35, is there anything in particular that, at least when the twins are well grown, that Rebekah doesn't like about Esau? ** yes, the daughters-in-law that he'd given them

--- By the way, in Whose presence was Isaac going to bless Esau, v. 7? ** the Lord's

=== So this sounds like a pretty serious blessing, doesn't it?

*-- Gen. 27:8-10 What is the first thing that Rebekah tells Jacob to do, v. 8? ** to listen to her and do what she says

--- What plan does Rebekah have to thwart her husband's plan to give his special blessing to his favored, older son? ** she tells Jacob to go get baby goats and she'll fix the tasty meat that Isaac so loved from the goats, then Jacob will take the meat in and get the blessing before Esau gets back

--- How many kids was Jacob to get? ** 2

=== I find this very interesting! Rebekah needs 2 kids to equal the deer or other wild game that Esau would catch, but surely Isaac wasn't going to eat all of the meat that would be made from the deer or game! You'd think that one kid would do! Though maybe there was some custom of having an enormous amount or something. Or maybe they want Isaac to get suspicious if there weren't more left-overs. Though I don't think they could really have thought they could keep it from Isaac forever, since Esau would be sure to say something. I don't know, but I'm amazed with needing 2 kids! Of course, maybe the savoury dish was just made from the liver or the heart or sweetbreads, in which case you'd need 2 little baby goats to equal one larger animal. But that really isn't the point of the story, is it!

--- We have no way of knowing exactly why Rebekah is going to do this deceitful thing, but I can think of 2 possible reasons; can you? ** (1) she liked Jacob better and want the best blessing for him, or (2) she knows from what God had told her almost 80 years earlier that Jacob is going to be greater than Esau, so she's "helping" God carry out His plan (much as Sarah "helped" God with His plan when she gave Hagar to Abraham)

=== But we aren't told what her reasoning was, so let's just stick to the facts and not try to analyze her! The facts are that she told Jacob to bring her 2 kids to make stew with and then he'd go get the blessing.

*-- Gen. 27:11-12 What objection does Jacob have to his mother's plan? ** Esau's hairy and he himself is smooth, so his father would know the difference and not only not bless him but might curse him instead

=== This is a different word for "hairy" than back when the twins were born. It means shaggy or very hairy and is also translated "kid" or "goat. So Esau must really have been hairy as an adult!

--- So does Jacob seem to have any objection to the immoral side of this? ** no

--- What seems to be his worry? ** just that he'll get caught!

--- What did Jacob say that Isaac might think he was if he were caught in this? ** a deceiver

--- Would he be? ** yes

=== Again, let's remember, now, that Jacob is about 77 years old; he's not some teenaged boy!

--- And what did he worry might happen if Isaac caught on to what was happening? ** that he might get cursed instead of blessed

--- But how might Isaac catch on to the deception? ** he might feel of Jacob and feel how smooth his skin was as compared to Esau's

*-- Gen. 27:13-14 How did Rebekah calm her son's fears about being cursed? ** she said that if there were a curse, it would be upon her

--- What did she say his job was? ** just to obey his mother

=== It sounds as she was taking the responsibility of this deceit on herself.

--- Did Jacob obey his mother? ** yes, he went out and got the kids for her

--- What did Rebekah do with the kids? ** made the nice spicy meat that her husband liked so much

*-- Gen. 27:15-17 How did Rebekah take care of the worries Jacob had had about passing himself off as his brother? ** she got out a good set of clothes of Esau's for Jacob to wear; then she took the uncured goat skins and put them on the backs of his hands and on the smooth parts of his neck

=== Esau must really have been a hairy man if the skins of a kid would feel like his skin!

=== One wonders why Esau's clothes were in his mother's tent. He surely didn't sleep there. But maybe she was mending them. I don't know.

--- By the way, were these just any old clothes of Esau's? ** no, they were good ones

=== The word means ""delightful," "desirable." The NAS and NIV say "best", which in my opinion is reading something into the word that isn't necessarily there. But they were very good clothes, at any rate.

--- And what was the last step after she had Jacob change his clothes and put the skins on? ** she gave him the dish of tasty meat and some bread for his father to eat.

*-- Gen. 27:18-19 As Jacob enters his father's tent, what does Jacob say? ** he addresses his father, saying, "Daddy" or equivalent

--- And what does Isaac answer? ** "Yes, I'm here, which of my sons are you?"

=== Have any of you with several children ever called home, then when one child answers, you have to ask at first which one you're talking to?

--- Who does Jacob say he is? ** Esau, the firstborn

--- What does Jacob ask Isaac to do? ** to get up and eat his meat and then bless him

*-- Gen. 27:20 Does Isaac seem to have been taken in completely by Rebekah and Jacob's ruse? ** no, he sounds suspicious

--- Does Isaac sound like a senile old man? ** no, he sounds sharp to me; he's suspicious and he's checking things out

--- What is the first thing that seems to have aroused his suspicion? ** that "Esau" had gotten back so quickly from the hunt

--- What answer does Jacob have for that? ** that God had been with him and had brought him an animal

=== I don't know about Jacob, but I think I would have been afraid to have included God in my deception. It's one thing to tell a lie; but it seems even worse, to me, to include in a false report that God had done something.

--- How does Jacob refer to God? ** as the Lord, Isaac's God.

=== I'm beginning to wonder if that were the polite way of referring to God, to refer to Him as the God of the senior person involved. Remember that the trusted servant who got Rebekah for Isaac's bride certainly appeared to be a believer, but he always referred to God as the Lord God of his master Abraham.

*-- Gen. 27:21 Does this lie in which the name of God plays a part seem to calm all of Isaac's suspicions? ** not at all; now Isaac wants to put his hands on Jacob and see if this man feels like Esau

--- Is Isaac sneaky in the way he is going to feel Jacob? ** no, he openly tells him to come so that he can check on the truth of Jacob's statement

=== I would imagine that Jacob would be in an anxious state of mind, dealing with this suspicious father of his who is openly all but saying, "I don't think you are Esau."

*-- Gen. 27:22-23 What did Isaac do when Jacob came near him? ** felt Jacob's hands

--- Was Esau apparently really as hairy as a baby goat? ** evidently so, since the goat skins fooled Esau's father into believing that Jacob was actually Esau

--- Does this seem to have completely calmed Isaac's worry? ** no, because he remarks that the voice is like Jacob, but he guessed that he had to be Esau because of the hands

=== It says here "so he blessed him". I think this may have been just a superficial blessing, so to speak. Either that or this refers to the fact that Isaac decided to go ahead and eat and give him the blessing.

*-- Gen. 27:24 What final question does Isaac ask before going ahead with the blessing? ** "Are you really Esau?"

=== Can't you just imagine Jacob's state of mind! His father is still suspicious, and he could still get caught before he received the blessing.

--- So what does Jacob "have" to do? ** lie again that he really is Esau

=== It is hard enough to lie once, but to keep lying must have been awful. Though each lie told does make the next lie just a little easier to get out. And as we picture this scene in our minds, again remember, he's not just some teenager; he's about 77 years old!

*-- Gen. 27:25 Does this last lie seem to convince Isaac? ** it seems so, since he went ahead with the blessing ceremony

=== On the other hand, though, what else could Isaac do to establish the identity of this son? He's questioned him and felt him and listened carefully to his voice and questioned him again. The only other thing I can see that he could do would be to call someone else in and ask him the identity of this man.

--- So what is the first step of this ceremony? ** Isaac had Jacob bring him the food and he ate it

--- We had heard earlier that there was the meat and bread, what else is part of the meal, too? ** wine

=== Sounds like a pretty good meal!

*-- Gen. 27:26-27 After eating, what comes next? ** Isaac's tells Jacob to come give him a kiss

=== Kissing between men is common among many cultures. Everyone isn't a stuffy Englishman! So there is nothing unusual in this, especially since this is a father and son.

--- Did Isaac still have his other senses about him even though he was blind? ** yes

--- What sense in particular is mentioned here? ** his sense of smell

--- What did he smell? ** the "sagebrush", so to speak, on the clothing that Jacob was wearing; a field that God has really blessed and caused to grow

=== Evidently where Esau hunted had different plants than just the pasture lands where Jacob worked with the flocks.

--- In the blind Isaac's mind, whose clothes would these be then? ** Esau's

--- And whose were they in reality? ** Esau's

=== It doesn't say that Isaac was still suspicious, but if he were, this would have further reassured Isaac that the son there with him was truly Esau.

*-- Gen. 27:28 Isaac is starting to give "Esau" the blessing reserved for the first born. He seems finally convinced that this is really Esau.

--- What seems to help him start out with his blessing? ** the smell of the clothing was of a blessed field, so Isaac starts his blessing by talking about food

--- Specifically, what does Isaac say about things that do with food? ** that God will bring plenty of good, well-watered crops

=== I'm not sure, but "fatness of the land" may also refer to good hunting.

*-- Gen. 27:29 Now that Isaac has asked the Lord to provide plenty of food for "Esau", what does he ask for next, the first thing in this verse? ** that "Esau" and his descendants will be victors over other nations and people, others will pay him tribute, in other words, political power

--- Who else is included in that besides nations and peoples? ** his relatives

--- What is Esau's position in the family? ** the older son

--- But who had the Lord told Rebekah would have the power in the family? ** the younger

=== Again, we aren't told anything about whether Isaac was thinking about what the Lord had said or not. We are just told what Isaac said here. So let's not speculate but just stick to the facts.

--- What is the last thing that Isaac gave in his blessing? ** that those who do good to him will be blessed, but those who do bad to him will be cursed

--- Where have we heard those words before? ** in the first blessing that the Lord gave to Abraham

--- So does it sound as if Isaac thinks he's passing on to Esau the blessings to Abraham? ** it does to me

*-- Gen. 27:30-31 Well, it looks as though Jacob's timing was just right; what happens just as soon as Jacob has gotten his brother's blessing and left? ** Esau came in from hunting

=== Whesh! Jacob must have been relieved to be out of there when Esau came home! Especially with those goat skins on his hands and neck and wearing his brother's clothes! That would have been hard to hide from Esau!

--- What did Esau do after he came in from hunting? ** made some savory meat from his game

=== That would take a little while to do.

--- But then where did Esau take this meat? ** to his father Isaac

--- And what does Esau want? ** for Isaac to get up and eat the meat and then bless him as he had said earlier

*-- Gen. 27:32-33 What did Isaac ask him? ** who he was

--- What did Esau answer? ** that he was Esau, the firstborn

--- What is Isaac's reaction? ** very upset, bewildered, and shaking, perhaps scared

--- Why? ** because he thought he'd already blessed Esau

--- Had Isaac suspected any deception in blessing this first "Esau"? ** yes, quite a bit

--- What does Isaac ask then? ** who it was who had already come with meat for him and been blessed

--- Do you think Isaac really knew at this point what had happened? ** I would think so, or at least really suspected some sort of trickery

--- But is Isaac ready to take back his first blessing if this does prove to have been a deception? ** no, he says that whoever got it will keep it

*-- Gen. 27:34-35 Does the real Esau seem to need much explanation of what had just happened? ** apparently not

--- Why do you say that? ** because he asks for a blessing also

--- Does Isaac know now what happened? ** yes

--- Who does he say got the blessing? ** Esau's brother

--- By what means? ** through deception

=== So he realizes that, despite his precautions, that Jacob had tricked him.

--- Whose did Isaac say the blessing had really been? ** Esau's; "he has taken your blessing"

=== Again, we don't have any indication that God had earlier instructed Isaac to give the blessing to Jacob. And under normal circumstances it would have gone to Esau. So let's be careful in condemning (or condoning!) Isaac.

*-- Gen. 27:36 What does "Jacob" mean? ** supplanter

--- What does Esau say that "Supplanter" has done? ** supplanted him twice, once with taking away the birthright and now with taking away the blessing

--- Do you think that Esau should in all honesty have accused Jacob of "taking away" the birthright? ** no, Esau had sold it to him

--- What does Esau ask Isaac? ** didn't Isaac keep back a blessing for Esau

--- How much blessing do you think that Esau had wanted "kept back" for Jacob? ** probably not much!

=== To me it almost sounds as though Esau thought that Isaac should have suspected something and kept part of the first-born's blessing back for Esau.

*-- Gen. 27:37 What does Isaac tell Esau that Isaac has given to Jacob? ** being head of the family and having plenty of food

--- And what position would the rest of the family have toward this "head? ** they would be his servants

--- Does "head of the family" seem just to be an empty title? ** no, the "head" would be almost like a king over the rest of the family, it seems from this verse, since the others would be servants of the "head"

*-- Gen. 27:38 Now what seems to be "fair" to Esau? ** that Isaac should have more than one blessing to give out

--- Do you think that Esau had been concerned earlier that Isaac be sure and have a second blessing all ready for Jacob?! ** I doubt it!

=== Remember, this is the position that Esau had expected Jacob to be in -- left without a blessing! But again, to be fair, Esau was the firstborn and as such had expected the blessing of the firstborn.

--- What does Esau do after begging his father for a blessing for himself? ** starts crying

=== Now, to us that sounds awfully immature, but in those days and especially in those cultures men showed their emotions more. Crying is perfectly acceptable in some cultures for men even now. So I don't think that Esau was just being a big baby.

*-- Gen. 27:39-40 What "blessing" does Isaac give Esau in v. 39? **

=== It depends on your translation. The KJ sounds like he will be blessed with fertile soil and water, however, the NAS and NIV say that he will be living away from good soil and water. I asked my son to check it in the Hebrew, and it says "from the...", so it sounds more like the NAS is correct. And we know later at least, they lived in the desert. But I've read that at first he lived where there was good land.

--- Does Isaac prophecy a nice, quiet, peaceful farmer's life for Esau? ** no, Esau will live by his sword -- there will be plenty of fighting and having to protect himself

--- What does Isaac say about the political relationship between Jacob's and Esau's descendants? ** that Esau's will be under Jacob's

--- Will Esau's descendants always be weak and helpless? ** no, they will eventually get strong and break away from Jacob's

*-- Gen. 27:41 Does this secondary blessing appease Esau? ** no

--- How does he feel about his twin brother? ** he's filled with hate

--- And what does Esau plan to do about it? ** he plans to kill Jacob

--- When does Esau plan on killing Jacob? ** after their father Isaac dies

--- When does Esau think that will be? ** very soon

--- Remember back in the first part of the chapter, what had Isaac evidently thought about his own life span? ** he wanted to give his final blessing to Esau, so he might have thought that he would die soon

=== He didn't know when, but he was just preparing for that day, whenever it might be.

*-- Gen. 27:42 It says in v. 41 that Esau said this in his heart; but does Esau keep these terrible thoughts entirely to himself? ** evidently not

--- What makes you say that? ** someone told Rebekah about it

--- Who does Rebekah tell about Esau's thoughts? ** Jacob

--- Who can Rebekah blame for this bad situation? ** herself

*-- Gen. 27:43-44 Who does Rebekah want Jacob to listen to and follow? ** herself

--- Have we seen that before and its results before? ** yes, in tricking Isaac to get the blessing

--- Rebekah knows that her first advice has ended with one brother planning on murdering the other; how does she hope to stop this? ** by sending Jacob far away

--- To where and to whom? ** clear up to Haran to her brother Laban

--- How long does she foolishly think that it will take to make this proud man Esau swallow his intense anger at the injury, now double injury in his eyes, done to him by his twin? ** a few days

--- Does it seem to you that Rebekah thinks that Esau takes much stock in the blessing and birthright? ** not to me!

=== If she thinks he will "forget" all of this in a few days, it would seem to me that she didn't think he though much of them.

*-- Gen. 47:45 But how would Jacob know if Esau had forgotten it? ** Rebekah would send for him

--- By the way, who does Rebekah say did "something" to Esau? ** Jacob

=== "What you have done to him," not "what we have done to him." You wonder if she plans on telling Esau her part in it.

--- How does Rebekah seem to think that the deception has affected her own relationship with Esau? ** she seems to feel that she has lost him

=== This could mean 2 different things. (1) Perhaps she thought that Esau would figure out that she had some part in it, and that then he would hate her, too, and be estranged from her, or (2) perhaps she figured that if Jacob stayed there that Esau would actually kill him, and then they would be required to kill Esau for murder. At any rate, she didn't want to "lose" her sons, however that might have been.

*-- Gen. 27:46 Remember that Jacob is about 77 years old; can this man just pick up and take a trip of 400 or so miles? ** it doesn't seem so

--- Why do you say that? ** because it would seem that he needed to get his father's permission

=== Though maybe they want his flight to appear to be just a natural trip.

--- What ruse does Rebekah use to get Isaac to be the instrument by which Jacob will appear to be just innocently leaving and not just running away from Esau? ** "Jacob needs a wife, and I can't stand the women here"

--- In fact, what does she say it will be like if Jacob marries one of the local women? ** her life won't be worth living

--- What experience has Rebekah had with "these daughters of Heth"? ** they have been her neighbors for many years, and, remember, Esau is married to 2 of them!

--- Just to get our bearings here, about how long have these "daughters of Heth" been her neighbors? ** since her marriage about 97 years earlier (20 yrs barren + twins @ 77 yrs = 97)

--- And about how long had two of them been her daughters-in-law? ** about 35 years (26:34, Esau was 40 when he was married)

=== Rebekah has helped her favorite son to lie to his father. She has been deceptive. In the process she is going to make it impossible for Jacob to remain at home. As far as we know, she will die before Jacob returns; she will never see him again when he leaves. That, in itself, besides seeing the increased enmity between her sons, would be a terrible punishment to her. She would have only herself to blame when she missed him. Also, one can't help but wonder if Isaac and Esau knew of her help in the deception; one would think they would be bound to suspect it. And with all of those servants around, they could easily find out about her making the meat and fixing Jacob up. One wonders if that made for unrest between husband and wife, not to mention that Esau would be bitter toward her. But the Bible doesn't give us details about this, so we shouldn't speculate too much here. But we can figure out that Isaac lives for about 43 more years, so he not only will see Jacob again, he will also see all of Jacob's children.

REVIEW:

-- What, in just a sentence, is the gist of this chapter? ** the deception made in order to get the first born's blessing for Jacob, and its consequences.

-- About how old were Jacob & Esau at this time? ** about 77

-- About how old was Isaac at this time? ** 60 + 77 = 137

APPLICATION:

** When God has a plan, we should figure that God will use His own means to bring that plan to pass, and we shouldn't resort to sinful ways to "help" in the plan.

** Our plans aren't always God's plans -- and God's are the right ones.

** Lies will be found out.

** Lies can result in the opposite of what we want.

** Sibling rivalry goes way back in history! We should do what we can to keep it down with our own children.

** Also, we should be careful not to be the cause of rivalry with our own siblings, but to keep it down as much as possible.

** We should be good daughters-in-law to our husbands' parents.

** If we are the parent-in-law, we should try to get along with our children's spouses.

Chapter 28: Jacob's Dream of Ladder to Heaven

-- In 27:46, what had Rebekah just gotten through telling Isaac? ** that she was sick of her Canaanite daughters-in-law and that she didn't want Jacob to marry a Canaanite

-- Why had she done that? ** because she wanted to get Jacob out of there before Esau carried through his threat to kill him

-- And why did Esau want to kill Jacob? ** because Jacob had through deception gotten the blessing of the first born son

*-- Gen. 28:1 So now what does Isaac do? ** calls Jacob to him and tells him not to marry a Canaanite

--- Who else have we heard of who was not to have a Canaanite wife? ** Isaac

=== So here we have the one to whom the special blessing of God had been given (though through deception!), again told to not marry a Canaanite.

--- Does it sound as though Isaac berated Jacob first for having taking Esau's blessing? ** no, it just says that Isaac blessed Jacob

--- In fact, do we have any indication of whether or not Isaac ever said anything to Jacob about taking the blessing? ** no, not one way or the other

=== So we won't speculate on that.

*-- Gen. 28:2 Where does Isaac tell Jacob to go? ** up to Padanaram

=== Remember, Padanaram was a large plain that was surrounded by mountains, and the town of Haran was there in this plain.

--- Where did Jacob's mother's people live? ** up in Haran

--- What was her brother's name? ** Laban

--- And instead of marrying one of the local women, whom does Isaac instruct Jacob to marry? ** one of his Uncle Laban's daughters

=== So Jacob, the product of a twice first cousin "removed" marriage is being instructed to marry a "whole" first cousin. Talk about intermarriage!

--- Who is this Bethuel who is mentioned? ** Rebekah and Laban's father, the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother

*-- Gen. 28:3 Verse 1 said that Isaac blessed Jacob, but now we're going to see more specifically how Isaac blessed him.

--- Who does Isaac want to bless Jacob? ** God Almighty

--- How? ** by making Jacob fruitful and giving him lots of descendants

--- What does it sound as if all of these descendants will be like? ** sort of a group or its own, to me it sounds like almost a separate nation

*-- Gen. 28:4 Whose blessing does Isaac ask that God give to Jacob? ** the one He had given to Abraham

--- Does Isaac want Abraham's blessing just for Jacob alone? ** no, for Jacob's descendants also

=== So this special blessing from the Lord went to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It reminds me that the Lord said He would be called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

--- What part of this blessing to Abraham is mentioned here? ** inheriting the land

--- What was Jacob like now in that land that he would inherit? ** a stranger

--- Now, in the case of Abraham and Isaac, would this special blessing from God go to all of their descendants? ** no, just to one special son

--- And how will it be with Jacob, will it go just to one son, also? ** no, it will go to all of his sons

*-- Gen. 28:5 So where is Jacob going? ** to Haran up to his mother's brother

--- Though this verse doesn't say, why is Jacob going there? ** to get a wife

--- According to the first part of the verse, how did Jacob happen to go there to get a wife? ** his father sent him there

--- What does it call Rebekah's father? ** Bethuel the Syrian

--- Why would Bethuel, the nephew of Abraham, be called a Syrian? ** because the land where he lived was than in Syria, though he himself was not of Syrian blood

*-- Gen. 28:6-7 Did Isaac send Jacob away secretly so that Esau wouldn't know anything about it? ** evidently not

--- Why do you say that? ** because Esau even knows what his father said to Jacob

--- Does Esau know that his father seems to be on friendly terms with Jacob (v. 6)? ** yes, because he knew that Isaac blessed Jacob again

--- Do we have any way of knowing if either Isaac or Esau know just why Rebekah wanted Jacob gone (that is, to save him from being killed by Esau)? ** the Bible doesn't say one way or the other

=== We could conjecture all day on this and get no where, so let's just go on.

--- Does Esau know the reason that Isaac has given for sending Jacob away? ** yes, to get a non-Canaanite wife

--- Does Esau seem to know that his mother is involved also? ** yes, in v. 7 it says about both parents.

--- Gen. 28:8-9 Is Esau married at this time (Gen 26:34)? ** yes

--- To whom? ** 2 Hittite women

--- Does Esau know if his wives are pleasing to his father? ** yes, he sees that they are so unpleasing to him, that his father is sending Jacob away to get a non-Canaanite wife

--- What does Esau do to try to please his father? ** gets 1 more wife who is a relative

--- How does Esau manage to get relatives for wives? ** marries a daughter of Ishmael

--- But would Ishmael's daughter be half Canaanite (on her mother's side)? ** no

--- Why not? ** because we were earlier told that Hagar got a wife for Ishmael from Egypt

--- And what nationality was Hagar? ** Egyptian

--- So what would Esau's new wife's ancestry be? ** 3/4 Egyptian and 1/4 "Abraham"

=== It mentions that this daughter is the sister of Nebajoth. Nebajoth is mentioned earlier as being the firstborn of Ishmael. The fact that it says this is his sister, leads me to wonder if perhaps Ishmael had more than one wife.

--- What relationship is there between Esau and Ishmael? ** uncle and nephew

--- So what relationship would there be between Esau and his new wife? ** first cousins

--- And what relationship will there be between Jacob and the daughters of Laban? ** first cousins

=== Frankly, I find this sort of pathetic. Esau sees that his parents are displeased enough with their Canaanite daughters-in-law to send Jacob far away to get a relative for a wife, back to where his father had gotten a wife through orders from the grandfather Abraham. So Esau tries to please them by getting a relative for a wife and goes to his father's brother. It just seems sort of sad to me knowing that as hard as he's trying, it probably really doesn't do any good. Actually, it will just tie Esau's descendants in tighter with Ishmael's, and we'll see as we go along that they both will be enemies of Jacob's descendants.

=== So now let's follow Jacob as he starts out from home.

*-- Gen. 28:10 So where does Jacob start out for? ** Haran

--- And where were Isaac and his family living at this time? ** Beersheba

--- Where have we heard of Beersheba before? ** (1) that is the location of the well that Abraham named "Well of the Seven" or "Well of the Oath" after his covenant with Abimelech about 125 years earlier, and (2) that is also where Abimelech and Isaac made their oath together, probably after the twins were born

=== Much later it became part of the land of Israel and was its southernmost border.

--- So what direction is Jacob headed? ** north

--- By the way, are we told if he walked or rode a horse or a camel or just how he traveled? ** no

--- In fact, are we told if anyone went with him or not? ** no

=== I'd always pictured him as walking off by himself, but we really don't know the details at all, do we?

*-- Gen. 28:11 Where did Jacob come to in this verse? ** "a certain place"

--- What time of day was it? ** sunset

--- So what does Jacob do when night comes as he came to this "certain place"? ** naturally, he settles down to sleep

=== From what we are told of the place later in this chapter, we know that he had gone about 55 miles. So this doesn't sound as if it were the next day after leaving. It was probably more like 3 days later.

=== Remember, he was probably used to sleeping out of doors. This would have been no hardship for him.

--- What did Jacob use for pillows? ** a rock!

--- Were there other stones around? ** yes, he took "of" the stones

=== We learn later in the story that it was just one rock he used. My guess from the rest of the story is that it was a cylindrical shaped, rather long stone.

=== We think of his lying there with his head on a hard rock. However, there are 2 things that come to my mind. One is an old custom of the Japanese who would use blocks of wood as neck supports, not as a cushion. The other is that Jacob wore a cloak that he used as a blanket also. It could well have had a hood or a section that could be drawn up over the head. This could have been used as a cushion for the rock, while the rock just either supported his neck or raised his head up off the ground.

*-- Gen. 28:12 Does Jacob fall into a deep, dreamless sleep? ** no, he has a dream

--- What is first mentioned that Jacob saw in his dream? ** a ladder

=== This word for "ladder" is only used once in the Bible. It could be a stairway. It comes from a word that means to mound up or make high. Some people say it's a ramp. The exact shape isn't the important thing here.

--- Where was the bottom of the ladder? ** on the earth

--- Where was the top of the ladder? ** reaching to heaven

--- What was on this ladder? ** angels of God

--- What were the angels doing? ** going up and down the ladder.

*-- Gen. 28:13 What was at the top (or above) this ladder? ** the Lord God

--- Did God identify Himself? ** yes

--- How? ** as the God of Abraham and Isaac

--- Why might He have said this? ** remember, Canaan and Philistia were lands of a multitude of gods; there were local gods all over the place; but this God is saying that He is a personal God, one who had been around before and has especially been in close contact with Jacob's family

--- What does God say after identifying Himself? ** that He will give the land where Jacob is sleeping to Jacob and his descendants

--- To whom had God promised this land before? ** to Abraham and Isaac

*-- Gen. 28:14 Now the Lord God says 3 things about Jacob's descendants; what is the first one? ** that they would be so many it would be like the dust of the earth

--- Who else was given that promise? ** Abraham

=== Also, both Abraham and Isaac had been promised that their descendants would be like stars, there would be so many.

--- What was the second thing God said about Jacob's seed? ** they would spread out in all 4 directions

--- And the third thing? ** all the people in the world would be blessed through them

=== Again, I think that last part has a double meaning: Messianic as well as meaning that the Jews themselves would be a blessing to mankind.

--- And, again, to whom had this been said before? ** to Abraham and Isaac

*-- Gen. 28:15 Then God gives some personal messages just to Jacob; what is the first one? ** that He will be with Jacob

--- Where will the Lord be with Jacob? ** wherever he goes

--- Where does the Lord say He will take Jacob? ** back to that land again, back home

--- How long will the Lord be with him? ** until He kept all of His promises to him

--- So, does Jacob know if he will ever be able to come back home again? ** yes

--- How does he know this? ** God said He'd bring him back there

=== So here we have a renewal by God Himself of the blessing that Isaac had given Jacob through Jacob's deception. Also a renewal of the blessing that God had given to Abraham and Isaac.

--- So does this seem to have been just an ordinary dream like we have? ** no, it was a special dream or vision

*-- Gen. 28:16-17 When Jacob wakes up, does he just think this was all just some dream? ** no, he realizes that God had really been there

--- Had Jacob previously been aware that God was there? ** no

=== Again we see that the Lord is not just some local God.

--- What emotion did Jacob feel? ** fear

--- What does he think the place of his night's sleep was? ** the house of God and the gate to heaven

--- In that he thought it was the house of God, did Jacob just think it was a lovely, peaceful place? ** no, he said it was a place of fear, dread, awe

=== The same word is used for Jacob's being "afraid" and his calling the place "dreadful". The NAS and NIV both say the place is "awesome," which just shows us how lightly that word is used nowadays! Also, I don't think this fear is so much as being scared to death of something and wanting to avoid it, as it means having a good healthy fear of it and not wanting to cross it. It reminds me of how little children should fear their parents enough so that they don't run out into the street or play with matches.

*-- Gen. 28:18-19 When did Jacob get up? ** early in the morning

=== Jacob now did two things to his "pillow."

--- What was the first thing Jacob did to his pillow? ** set it upright as a pillar

--- What was the purpose of this? ** it made a sort of monument in memory of this event

=== In quite a few other places in the Bible, stones are set up as monuments or remembrances of an event.

--- And what was the second thing? ** he poured oil on it

--- Now, in view of the fact that he poured oil on it, what else might it have been besides just a monument? ** it reminds me of oil offerings, so I'm wondering if perhaps the stone were sort of an altar

=== But I'm not sure of this.

--- What had been the name of that place before this event? ** Luz

--- What did Jacob name it? ** Bethel

--- Do you have a footnote that tells what Bethel means? ** House of God

*-- Gen. 28:20-21 Then what does Jacob do in the very first part of v. 20? ** makes a vow

=== I sort of divide this vow into 2 conditions. Jacob's keeping this vow will depend on something in the present time for him and something in the future.

--- What condition for keeping the vow had to do with Jacob's present situation? ** if God would be with him and take care of him, giving him food and clothes

--- And then what was the future part of the condition of the vow? ** if God would take him back to his father's house in peace

--- So if God did those 2 things for him, then what did Jacob vow that he would do himself? ** have the Lord (Jehovah) as his God

--- So does it sound to you as if perhaps Jacob were not at this time what we would call "saved"? ** perhaps, in that he said that if God did all of these things, then Jacob would have Him for his God

=== Or it could just have been a lack of faith such as we, though saved, are guilty of having sometimes. But I think most people call this the time of Jacob's conversion. I don't think we should be dogmatic about it, though. And we need to be careful. So let's just stick to the facts that we're given.

*-- Gen. 28:22 Now back to Jacob's "pillow."

--- What does Jacob say he had done to this stone? ** set it up as a pillar

--- And what would this pillar be? ** it would be God's house

-- When would it be God's house? ** when God brought him back there

--- How could a stone be a house of God? ** I think perhaps he means that the stone would really be an altar to the Lord God and that he would worship there again if he came back

--- We want to be careful not to try to read Jacob's mind, but does it seem that his faith is very strong at this point? ** not to me

--- What else would Jacob do besides have the Lord as his God if the Lord kept all of His promises, end of the verse? ** tithe

--- Where have we heard of giving a tithe before this time? ** when Abraham gave a tenth of the plunder to Melchizedek

=== I think we need to be careful not to run Jacob down. We need to remember that the Lord said He would be known as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The term "children of Israel" all through the Bible means the children of Jacob, Israel being Jacob's other name. So Jacob is no one for us to scoff at, and though we may see his weaknesses, we need to be respectful of him, I think.

REVIEW:

-- Who is sent away from home on what errand? ** Jacob to get a wife from among relatives

-- What actually had been the original reason why he was sent away? ** to keep his brother from killing him as soon as their father died

-- What did Esau do to try to please his parents? ** married his first cousin on Ishmael's side

-- What happened one night during Jacob's journey? ** God appeared in a dream and renewed His covenant with him

-- How did this affect Jacob's spiritual life? ** he seems to have at least began to become a believer at that time, saying that if the Lord fulfilled His promises, then He would be Jacob's God

APPLICATION:

** God can use even the wickedness of men to carry out His plans.
** God is faithful to His promises.
** God can take care of us even in what seems to us dire circumstances.
** We should take the Lord as our God without testing Him.
** We shouldn't marry unbelievers (those not of "God's family).
** We should have a healthy fear of the Lord.
** We should be respectful about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
** God is patient.
** We should give "tribute" to the Lord, as He is our King.

Chapter 29: Jacob Reaches Haran, Marries 2 Wives, and Starts a Family

=== Well, Jacob is on his way up to his Uncle Laban in Haran, fleeing from his furious brother and in search of a wife. God has appeared to him in a dream on the way. Remember, this is a journey of over 400 miles, and Jacob will have a lot of time to think!

*-- Gen. 29:1-3 As Jacob goes on his way, what "land" does he come to? ** "the east"

--- What is in the field there? ** a well

--- What does he see by the well? ** 3 flocks of sheep

--- What was over the opening to the well? ** a stone

--- Just a little stone? ** no a big one

=== The NAS says that the mouth of the well was large. However, if it were a large opening to the well, the stone would also have to be large. So I think the largeness is more about the stone.

--- Why would they want to block the opening of the well with a stone? ** to keep dirt out and to keep animals and people from falling in

=== Also, if there were a lot of shifting sand from the winds, that might clog up the well.

--- So how would they get water out with a stone over the opening to the well? ** they'd roll the stone away when they wanted water

--- We aren't told if this is the well for all purposes, but at least for what was this well used? ** to water the flocks

*-- Gen. 29:4 Now Jacob begins asking the herders some questions; what is the first question? ** where they were from

--- And where were these shepherds and their flocks of sheep from? ** Haran

--- Now, where have we heard about a well before in connection with the city of Haran? ** when Abraham's servant went up there to get a wife for Isaac

--- Does that make it 100% sure that this was the same well? ** no

=== It could be, but we aren't told, and I don't think we can know for sure. But that really isn't essential to our story here.

*-- Gen. 29:5 What was the second question that Jacob asked them? ** if they knew Laban

--- How did he identify Laban? ** as the son of Nahor

--- And who was Nahor? ** Abraham's brother

--- Now, was Laban the actual son of Nahor? ** no, he was the grandson

=== I wonder why he didn't ask about Bethuel. Perhaps Nahor had been a very important man there, maybe even a founder of the city and Bethuel was just one of the men. But we aren't given any details.

--- Now, I realize that it's just speculation, but why might we wonder if Nahor had been one of the founders of the city of Haran? ** because of the name of the city, Haran, because that was also the name of Abraham and Nahor's brother who had died back in Ur

=== But, again, that is just speculation, so we need to be careful. At any rate, evidently Nahor was well known in the area and more important than his son Bethuel.

--- Well, did the herders of these 3 flocks know Laban? ** yes

*-- Gen. 29:6 Then what did Jacob ask them? ** if Laban were well

--- And what did they reply about Laban? ** that he was well

--- But then who did they point out to Jacob? ** Laban's daughter Rachel

--- What was she doing? ** just now coming along with the sheep

--- Why would she be taking sheep there? ** to water them at the well

--- From this, does it sound as if taking care of the sheep of a family were the job of the most important person in the family? ** no!

*-- Gen. 29:7 What time of the day is it? ** the middle of the day

--- Here Jacob, a stranger, is talking to some shepherds; what does he ask them? ** why they are just standing around in the middle of the day

--- What's wrong with being there in the middle of the day? ** that's not the time to be just standing around

--- What does he tell them they should be doing instead? ** watering the sheep and getting them back out in the fields to eat

--- That seems rather presumptuous of Jacob, but what kind of work had Jacob probably done back home? ** we aren't really told this, but Jacob probably took care of the flocks; probably he was the "boss man" and oversaw all of the flocks with lots of men under him

--- Probably why wouldn't Isaac, Jacob's father, have been in charge of the flocks? ** he was old and blind

=== So Jacob knew how sheep should be taken care of and knew they weren't doing a good job if the sheep were just standing around and not eating, and he was probably used to giving orders to lazy helpers.

*-- Gen. 29:8 What excuse did they have for just standing around? ** that they had to wait until all of the flocks were there and then someone rolled away the lid so they could give their sheep the water

=== These stone lids were often extremely heavy and might take several men to roll them away.

--- But how many flocks of sheep had Jacob already seen there even before Rachel was coming up? ** 3

--- We aren't told, but can you think of any reasons why these shepherds hadn't already opened up the well? ** (1) perhaps some of these shepherds were young women (though Jacob called them "brethren", (2) perhaps they were fairly young men who were the shepherds and not strong enough to roll the stone lid away themselves, or (3) perhaps there was just a standing order that they had to wait until everyone was there so that either the well wouldn't have to be left open for the others or else it wouldn't be closed up when some girl arrived by herself with her flock

--- From the wording of the KJ and NAS, does it sound as if the herders already there would be rolling the stone away? ** not to me, as it says "then they will roll it away"

*-- Gen. 29:9-10 As they are standing around talking, who came up? ** Rachel

--- What was her household job? ** taking care of her father's sheep

--- So was it unusual that she had the sheep that day? ** it doesn't sound like it

=== Now after seeing Rachel, Jacob did two things.

--- What was the first? ** he rolled the stone lid away by himself

--- Then what was the second? ** he jumped in and watered Rachel's sheep for her

=== I imagine that gave her a surprise, this stranger just jumping in and opening the well and then watering her flock. Some strange man's opening the well would have been enough of a surprise, but for him to just start watering her sheep for her must really have been different!

=== By the way, it says that Jacob did that when he saw Rachel and saw Laban's sheep. However, I rather doubt if seeing the sheep had inspired greed in him, to marry this girl for the sheep. I imagine that he saw this relative and that she had sheep with her, and he just wanted to be helpful. And perhaps he also wanted to make a good first impression. To me it sounds like a natural act on Jacob's part to get up and water his uncle's sheep.

--- By the way, are we told how the water was to be gotten? ** no

--- Again, have we ever heard about a well near Haran before? ** yes

--- When? ** close to 100 years earlier when Abraham's servant went to Haran to look for a wife for Isaac

--- What kind of well had that been? ** one where you "went down into and up out of" the well

--- However, we need to be careful; does this positively mean that this was the same well? ** no

--- Does it positively mean that it wasn't the same well? ** no

=== Also, there is the chance that if it were the same well, that it had been improved in that 100 years. But I find it interesting that there are wells outside of Haran in both stories. But I guess a well would be place where you could count on meeting someone eventually. We'll find a well involved in the story of Moses meeting his future in-laws over in Exodus, too.

*-- Gen. 29:11-12 After watering her sheep, Jacob did 3 things; what was the first? ** he went up and kissed Rachel

=== I'll bet she was startled!

--- Then what did he do? ** started crying

=== Remember, crying was acceptable among strong men, so he wasn't being a sissy.

--- And lastly what did he do? ** told her who he was

--- Who did he say he was? ** a relative of her father and the son of her aunt

=== I think the NIV is incorrect here in saying that he "had told her". From other translations I get the impression that he just now told her.

--- And how did Rachel react to all of this? ** she ran home and told her father

--- And who was her father? ** Laban

--- By the way, what apparently happened to Jacob? ** it sounds like he was just left standing there by the well

*-- Gen. 29:13-14 What did Laban do upon hearing that his nephew was standing out there by the well? ** ran out to meet him, hugged him, kissed him, and took him home

--- Had Laban ever before had a somewhat similar experience concerning a female relative, a well, and relatives (or ambassadors of relatives)? ** yes, when the servant went from Abraham to get a wife for Isaac, he met Rebekah at the well, and she also left him standing there while she ran home and told Laban

--- Does Laban seem really glad to see Jacob, do you think? ** yes, he gives every evidence of it

=== It doesn't say that Jacob gave expensive gifts to Rachel and Laban saw those, does it? As it did when the servant came to get a wife for Isaac.

--- Does Laban find out why Jacob is there? ** evidently; it says Jacob told him everything

=== I'm wondering if he told him of the deception in getting the blessing! But we aren't told just what "all things" includes, so let's not speculate.

=== Now let's get a better picture of things here. Laban is still in charge of everything here and runs out to greet his nephew.

--- About how long before this time had Rebekah left to go marry Isaac? ** about 97 years!

=== Remember, Jacob is about 77 years old at this point and his mother had been barren for 20 years before having the twins.

=== We are never told Laban's age, but he had to have been at least 120, I'd say, in that Laban seemed to have been someone to be reckoned with back 97 years earlier. So it would seem that he, like his Uncle Abraham, had children in his old age. We aren't told if he had other children earlier or more than one wife. We are given no details as to his personal life. But we'll find out that Laban will still be lively 20 years from this time as well! So this isn't just some 45 year old man that a teenaged Jacob will be dealing with. It will be 2 very mature men involved here. About 77 years old and well over 100! But with that picture in mind, let's get back to the story.

--- How long did Jacob stay there at first? ** a month

*-- Gen. 29:15 After a month Laban asked Jacob 2 things; what was the first one? ** why Jacob should work for Laban for nothing

--- So then what naturally followed that Laban asked Jacob? ** what wages he wanted

--- So does it sound as if Jacob just sat around the house and talked or otherwise loafed away the time? ** no, it sound like Jacob was working

--- Why do you say that? ** because otherwise why would Laban think he should have wages

--- Would Jacob be an inexperienced worker for his uncle? ** no, it sounds as if he may have had a lot to do with the running of things back home

=== So it sounds like Jacob has gone up there to live and work, but his uncle doesn't want to take advantage of their being related but is willing to pay him for his work.

*-- Gen. 29:16-17 How many daughters did Laban have? ** 2

--- What were their names? ** Rachel and Leah

--- Who was the older? ** Leah

--- What do we know about how they looked? ** Leah had "weak eyes", whereas Rachel was very beautiful and attractive

=== Some people say this means she had a good figure, but I don't think we can say that just from these words. It seems just to mean "attractive." Remember, she was a niece of the beautiful Rebekah and Sarah. I'm not quite sure what the "weak eyes" means. Whether Leah squinted or just didn't have pretty eyes or what.

*-- Gen. 29:18-19 And how did Jacob feel about Rachel? ** he loved her

--- So what wages does Jacob ask? ** Rachel

--- How long does Jacob agree to work for Rachel? ** for 7 years

--- Is that agreeable to Laban? ** yes

=== My book on customs says that it was customary for a man to marry his cousin, and that this is still done in some places over there. He didn't have to marry her, but he had first choice, so to speak. One reason for this (besides knowing the family of your future son-in-law!) was that it would keep the property in the family.

--- Now, why would Jacob offer to work so long for Rachel, why not just ask to marry her; after all, he'd come up there to get a wife; I'm thinking of 2 reasons? ** (1) it seems to me that he had no bridal gift to offer for her, and he wanted Rachel, and (2) it also seems to me that he evidently hadn't heard from his mother, so I'm wondering if he thinks he may have to stay away from Esau for a long time, so why not get Rachel while he was waiting

=== As for bridal gifts, remember how Abraham's servant had given lots of expensive gifts to Rebekah's family. But since Jacob was "on the lam", I doubt if he had a caravan and gifts. His bridal gift will be 7 years of labor.

--- So is Jacob going to get back to his parents in just "a few days" as Rebekah had sort of said? ** no!

--- Again, was this arrangement of working for 7 years as a bridal gift for Rachel agreeable to Laban? ** yes

*-- Gen. 29:20 So how long did Jacob work for Rachel? ** 7 years

--- Did this seem like a very long time to Jacob? ** no, just like a few days

--- Why? ** because he loved her so much

*-- Gen. 29:21-22 At the end of the 7 years, what did Jacob want? ** to get married to Rachel

--- Does Laban seem to be agreeable? ** yes

--- So what did Laban do? ** he prepared the wedding feast

--- Who would be attending this wedding feast according to the KJ and NAS? ** the men of the area

=== This word can be specifically a male, however, the word can also just mean people. So I'm not sure just who attended.

*-- Gen. 29:23-24 Did Laban give Jacob a bride after the feast? ** yes

--- What time of day was it? ** evening

--- But what about this bride? ** she was the wrong one, Leah!

--- But was the marriage consummated? ** yes

--- What did Laban give to this wrong bride? ** Zilpah as a handmaid

--- Did Jacob seem to know the difference that night? ** no

--- We can't know for sure, but why might he not have known the difference? ** it was dark, perhaps their voices were alike, and perhaps he was tipsy

*-- Gen. 29:25-26 When did Jacob discover the mistake? ** in the morning

--- Does Jacob seem to think this was really a mistake? ** no, he calls it trickery

=== Hmm, trickery seems to run in the family!

--- What excuse does Laban give for his deceit? ** that a younger sister can't be married before the older sister

=== Now, several questions come to my mind! Why didn't Laban say so earlier? Why didn't Laban get a husband for Leah during that 7 years? Had he planned all the time for Jacob to marry both of his cousins? Or had he figured that surely Leah would get married within the 7 years? Hadn't Jacob known of this custom?

=== Now this custom wasn't confined just to that time and place. My customs book was written in 1972, and it says that this still holds true in parts of India, that it is very disgraceful for the younger to marry first, and is even in some places a crime! And the custom was prevalent in Imperial Germany. And remember, Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew"? However, one would think that Jacob would have been shrewd enough to think about it! I guess he was just so much in love with Rachel that he just didn't think any further! Or maybe he just figured his uncle would keep his word. There are a lot of human interest things here that we aren't told!

*-- Gen. 29:27 Does Laban have any solution for this problem? ** why certainly!

--- What was it? ** that Jacob could just promise to serve him for 7 more years and then he could have Rachel in addition to the older sister

--- Would he have to wait 7 more years to marry Rachel? ** no, just a week.

=== I've heard that the wedding feasts were often a week long; I don't know. But anyway, Leah would have a week's honeymoon and a week in which to try to win her husband's love before her pretty little sister stepped in. We aren't told if Leah were in on this plot at all or not. If she weren't, she wouldn't have had much choice but to go along with her father's plan. Another thing we aren't told is what Rachel was thinking and doing during this time! But, again, they both had to do what their father said.

--- If Jacob stays another 7 years, what advantage does Uncle Laban get out of this? ** 7 more years of an excellent worker; also he would still have his daughters there, and he could see any grandchildren who came along

*-- Gen. 29:28-30 Did Jacob go along with Uncle Laban's plan? ** yes

--- So how many wives does Jacob obtain in what length of time here? ** 2 in a week

--- Leah had gotten Zilpah to be her handmaid as a wedding present; does Rachel get anything? ** yes, Bilhah to be her handmaid

=== These handmaids will come into the picture quite a bit, so let's try to get them straight, which belongs to whom. The way I remember it is L-Z, "LaZy", for Leah and Zilpah. Then using the same system, R-B, "Rancho Bernardo" for Rachel and Bilhah.

--- And how much longer is Jacob going to work for his uncle, Laban? ** 7 more years

--- Jacob now has 2 wives; does he have any favorite? ** yes

--- Which one? ** naturally, Rachel, the one he had originally bargained for

--- By the way, about how old would Jacob be when he got married? ** about 84!

*-- Gen. 29:31 Now Who enters the picture in the first part of v. 31? ** the Lord

--- And what did the Lord "see?" ** that Leah was hated

=== It says she is hated here, but in v. 30 it said that Jacob didn't love her so much as Rachel. But evidently there was something more than just "not so much love". Also, Jacob may well feel bitter in having been tricked into taking this older sister as a wife and now having to deal with 2 feuding sisters.

--- So what was the result for Leah that the Lord observed that she wasn't favored? ** He opened Leah's womb

--- But what was the result for Rachel? ** Rachel was barren

*-- Gen. 29:32 What was the result of the Lord's opening Leah's womb? ** Leah became pregnant

--- So did Jacob "hate" Leah enough not to sleep with her? ** no!

--- Did Leah have a son or a daughter? ** a son

--- Who named this son? ** Leah

--- What did she name him? ** Reuben

--- Why? ** the name means "See a son"

--- But what does she mean by that? ** Leah is in hopes that now that she has given Jacob a son that he will love her

=== Isn't that a sad situation?

--- But, again, how about Rachel, according to v. 31? ** she was unable to have children

--- Now, we aren't told yet, but is this going to improve the probably already strained situation between the 2 sisters? ** no

*-- Gen. 29:33 Does Leah have anymore children at this time? ** yes

--- What sex this time? ** again, male

--- Who named him? ** Leah

--- What did Leah name this second son? ** Simeon

--- What does Simeon mean? ** "Hearing"

--- And why did Leah name him that? ** because the Lord heard that Leah was hated so He gave her a second son

=== This is the same word for "hated" as up in v. 31.

*-- Gen. 29:34 Any more children for Leah? ** yes

--- Again, what sex? ** male

--- Who names this one? ** Leah

--- What does Leah name this third son? ** Levi

--- What does Levi mean? ** "Joined"

--- And why did Leah name him "joined"? ** because she hopes that maybe now Jacob her husband will be joined to her because she has given him 3 sons

=== I find this all so sad!

*-- Gen. 29:35 Any more children for Leah? ** yes

--- What sex? ** male

--- Who names him? ** Leah

--- What does she name him? ** Judah

--- What does Judah mean? ** "Praise"

--- Why did Leah name him "Praise?" ** because she is going to praise the Lord

--- We aren't really given the reason, but why might she be praising the Lord? ** because He has given her yet another son, making 4 sons

--- What mention of her husband in the naming of Judah? ** none

--- And did Leah go on having children? ** no

--- But how many children does Rachel have at this point? ** none

REVIEW:

-- What, in a sentence, in the gist of this chapter? ** Jacob gets to Haran, meets and falls in love with Rachel, ends up with 2 wives through trickery, and has 4 sons

-- How long by the end of this chapter has Jacob been with his uncle Laban that we know of? ** 14 years

-- Why did Laban say that he tricked Jacob into marrying Leah? ** because, by custom, the younger daughter can't get married until the older one is married

-- How does Jacob feel about these two wives? ** he loves Rachel but doesn't really care much for Leah

-- What, in order of birth, are the names of Jacob's first 4 sons? ** Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah

-- By whom did Jacob have those 4 sons? ** by Leah

-- What are the names of the handmaids that Laban gave to his daughters and which to which daughter? ** Zilpah to Leah, and Bilhah to Rachel

APPLICATION:

** Don't be too trusting of humans, even if they are relatives!

** Bigamy is a terrible thing.

** Everyone wants to be loved.

** It is the Lord who gives children.

** Children are a blessing.

** We shouldn't be tricky; it leads to trouble.

** The Lord is compassionate; He cares what happens to us.

** God has a plan for everything.

** God can use our bad conduct to carry out His plans.

** We should look for our happiness in the Lord, not in people.

** If we find ourselves in a bad situation, we should still be kind.

Chapter 30: Rest of Jacob's children born; herds for wages

--- So, in review, how many children do the sisters each have at this point? ** Leah has 4 sons, Rachel has no children

--- Which sister had been envious of the other at the first? ** Leah had at least been very sad about Jacob's not loving her, while Rachel knew she was loved

--- Why, according to the Bible (29:31) did Leah have children? ** God had allowed Leah to have children because He saw that Jacob didn't love her

--- Gen. 30:1 What did Rachel realize? ** that she wasn't having any children

--- And what is her reaction to this? ** she was jealous of her sister Leah

=== So here 2 sisters have become enemies. Later, in the Law of Moses, God forbids a man to marry two sisters. It is really a sad situation. No matter how close sisters might have been before marriage, they couldn't help but become at least bitter rivals, if not enemies, in a situation like this one.

--- And who she does she seem to blame for the fact that she doesn't have any children? ** her husband Jacob

--- What does she tell Jacob to do? ** to give her children

--- How badly does Rachel want children? ** she says she'll die otherwise

*-- Gen. 30:2 What is Jacob's emotional reaction to Rachel at this point? ** he's angry

--- Who does Jacob seem to feel that Rachel should not blame for her infertility? ** himself

--- Instead Who does Jacob say is responsible for the fact that Rachel doesn't have any children? ** God

--- Is what he said true? ** yes

*-- Gen. 30:3-4 What solution does Rachel have for this problem? ** that Jacob marry her handmaid, Bilhah, who will then have children by Jacob for Rachel

--- Where have we heard of this solution before? ** Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar

=== My feeling is that this must have been a fairly common custom. Sort of a surrogate mother.

--- Did Jacob go along with the plan? ** yes

=== My guess is that he was simply trying to keep the peace, but it could be that he wanted a bunch of children, too.

*-- Gen. 30:5-6 Was Rachel's plan successful? ** yes, Bilhah go pregnant

--- What sex was her baby? ** male, a boy

--- Whose son does Rachel say this baby of Bilhah's is? ** hers, Rachel's

--- Who named this son? ** Rachel

--- What name? ** Dan

--- Do you have a footnote that says what "Dan" means? ** "judging"

--- Why did Rachel name the baby "Judging"? ** because she figured that God had heard her and given judgment and in the process given her a son

*-- Gen. 30:7-8 What happened again, v. 7? ** Bilhah had another son

--- Who named this baby? ** Rachel

--- What name did Rachel give this second baby? ** Naphtali

--- Do you have a footnote that says what Naphtali means? ** "Wrestling"

--- Why did Rachel name this baby "Wrestling?" ** because she felt that she had sort of won a wrestling match with her sister Leah

--- How had she won this wrestling match? ** by giving Jacob 2 sons

--- In the meantime, what about Leah and her childbearing, according to Gen. 29:35? ** she wasn't having any more children

=== So it sounds to me as if Leah had 4 sons one right after the other then stopped. Then Bilhah may have had her 2 sons one right after the other while Leah wasn't getting pregnant anymore. Of course, perhaps Rachel had given Bilhah to Jacob before Leah left off childbearing. I don't think we can say exactly when. But remember, all of Jacob's children except Benjamin will be born in a 12 year period (7 years working for Uncle Laban for Rachel -- again! -- plus 6 years of working for herds for himself; but remember there would be 9 months for the first pregnancy).

*-- Gen. 30:9-11 So how does Leah decide to solve the problem that she doesn't seem to get pregnant anymore, v. 9? ** gives her handmaid Zilpah to Jacob for a wife to have more children for Leah

=== Leah didn't necessarily wait until Bilhah had had 2 sons before she gave Zilpah to Jacob. She may have just seen that she hadn't gotten pregnant for a year or so and then given him Zilpah. We aren't told the details of this.

--- But Leah already has 4 sons, why isn't she just content with this (we have no Bible for this, just human -- that is, female -- psychology)? ** she probably figures that if her husband doesn't love her, at least she can beat her sister in one thing -- the number of her children

=== More children would be a status symbol.

--- Is this plan successful? ** yes, Zilpah has a son

--- Who names the baby? ** Leah

--- What name does Leah give him? ** Gad

=== Now we have a little difference here. I don't think it's an important one, but let's look at it anyway.

--- What does the KJ say that Leah said at the birth of the boy? ** "A troop cometh"

--- Do you have a footnote in the KJ that tells what "Gad" means? ** "a troop" or " crowd" or "company of people"

--- And what do the NAS and NIV say Leah said? ** "How fortunate"

--- Do you have a footnote in the NAS or NIV that say what "Gad" means? ** the NIV says "Gad" can mean either a "troop" or "good fortune"

=== I don't know where they get the "good fortune" part. Perhaps there is a similar word in Hebrew and the texts are different. But I don't think this is particularly important.

--- Presuming that the KJ is correct and "Gad" means "Troop," why would Leah name him "Troop"? ** because now she is having lots and lots of children, a whole troop full

=== Let's just leave it at that.

*-- Gen. 30:12-13 Then what happens, v.12? ** Zilpah has another son

--- What does Leah say at the birth of this son? ** "How happy I am!"

--- Who names this son? ** Leah

--- What does she name him? ** ""Asher"

--- Do you have a footnote that tells what "Asher" means? ** "Happy"

--- Why did Leah name him "Happy"? ** because she is happy and figures that women will say how happy she

=== In a sense, this might be considered an arms race!

--- So how many sons total does Jacob now have? ** 8 (Leah's 4 + 2 by Bilhah + 2 by Zilpah)

--- Of the 8, how many does Leah consider to be hers? ** 6 of them

*-- Gen. 30:14 Which son is mentioned here? ** Reuben

--- Who is Rueben's mother? ** Leah

--- What is the order of his birth? ** Jacob's first born son

=== At the time of this story I figure that Reuben is probably somewhere around 6 years old.

--- What time of the year does this take place? ** during the wheat harvest

=== I don't know if there is any significance to this detail or not. I don't know of any, though.

--- Where did Reuben go during the wheat harvest? ** out into the field

--- Are told if he were working in the field or just playing there? ** no

--- But what did Reuben find one day out in the field? ** mandrakes

=== From what I can find out, mandrakes are a tuber that sometimes were in the shape of a person. They have sort of a bland taste. If eaten in large quantities, they are poisonous. But if eaten in moderate quantities they were considered an aphrodisiac, however I read that it's also thought to cure barrenness. I wonder if they just grow during the wheat harvest and that's why the wheat harvest is mentioned. But I don't know enough about it.

--- What did Reuben do with these mandrakes? ** he took them to his mother Leah

--- Are we told what (if anything) Reuben knew about mandrakes or why he took them to his mother? ** no, just that he took them to her

--- Who wanted the mandrakes? ** Rachel

--- Why? ** because she was barren

--- But why would Leah want the mandrakes? ** because she had stopped bearing children

--- Did Rachel demand the mandrakes or ask nicely? ** she at least said "please"

--- Did she ask for all of the mandrakes? ** it doesn't sound like it, "some of them"

*-- Gen. 30:15 Does Leah immediately agree to share the mandrakes with her little sister? ** no

--- What interesting thing does Leah say as she refuses to give them to her younger sister? ** she accuses Rachel of having taken her (Leah's) husband!

--- Of course, Leah was the first wife, but what does she mean by accusing Rachel of taking her husband away? ** she knew that Rachel had Jacob's love

--- So what bribe does Rachel offer Leah? ** that Jacob would spend the night with Leah in exchange for the mandrakes

=== That sort of gives us an insight into household affairs, I think! Evidently Jacob spent most of his time with Rachel.

*-- Gen. 30:16 Did Jacob spend his days lolling around the tents? ** no, he seems to have worked out in the fields all day.

--- About how old would Jacob have been at this time? ** in his early 90s (@77 when he left home + 7 yrs. work for Rachel = @84 + @6-10 yrs for sons to be born = @90-94)

=== Let's say he was somewhere between 90 and 95. That should be accurate enough!

--- So how does Leah greet him as he comes home from work? ** I've rented you tonight, so you have to spend the night with me!

--- Is that a pretty accurate statement of what actually happened? ** it seems that way to me!

--- Did Jacob go along with this? ** yes

=== If you stop and think about it, Jacob really was caught in the middle of a very awkward situation that he hadn't asked for. Of course, he could have refused to take the 2 handmaids, but he really was in a bad situation. How does a man handle all of this if he's trying to be nice to his wives? Especially, though, if he's trying to keep peace in his household.

*-- Gen. 30:17 According to the first words of v. 17, evidently what had Leah been doing? ** praying to get pregnant again with a son

--- Who heard Leah? ** the Lord

--- With what results? ** Leah got pregnant and had a fifth son

--- So what was the result of Rachel's bribe? ** Leah had a 5th son of her own

=== I don't imagine that made Rachel very happy, but she had no one to blame but herself in the human sense.

--- Who really can be "blamed" for this? ** God!

*-- Gen. 30:18 Who does Leah give the credit to for this fifth son? ** God

--- Who named this son? ** Leah

--- What did she name him? ** Issachar

--- Do you have a footnote that says what Issachar means? ** "Hire" or "Wages" or "Reward"

--- What is the reason for this name that is given in this verse? ** that Issachar is a reward for having given her maid to Jacob

=== I'm confused here! It seems to me that Leah named him "A hire" or "Reward", because she had gotten pregnant through having hired Jacob for the night from Rachel with the mandrakes that Reuben had found; however she says here that it is her reward for having given Bilhah to Jacob as a wife. Perhaps it was for both reasons, simply that she is being rewarded.

*-- Gen. 30:19 Did Jacob then have no further marital relations with Leah? ** no

--- Why do you say that? ** because she had another son by him!

--- How many sons altogether did Leah have? ** 6

*-- Gen. 30:20 What did Leah name her 6th son ** "Zebulun"

--- What does Zebulun mean? ** meaning "Living, dwelling", because she hopes that since she has given Jacob 6 sons, he'll live with her.

=== The NIV says it probably means "honor," but the Hebrew word means to live with.

=== It sounds like perhaps he spent a lot more time with Rachel than with Leah, and now she's hoping he'll spend a good percent of his time with her. I don't know how things worked, whether Jacob had his own tent or whether he lived in the tents of his wives. Also, we aren't told anymore about Bilhah and Zilpah.

*-- Gen. 30:21 What about Leah's last child? ** it is a daughter

--- What does Leah name her? ** "Dinah"

--- What does Dinah mean? ** "judgment"

--- Are we told why this little daughter was named "Judgment? ** no

=== One can't help but wonder why she named her that. Was she saying that having a daughter instead of a son was a judgment? Or that God had judged her worthy or so many children? Or what?

--- By the way, what had Leah named her first son by Zilpah, 30:6? ** Dan

--- And what had we said that meant? ** "Judging"

=== They don't seem to come from the same Hebrew root, but they certainly sound connected to me. But I don't base any conclusions on that.

*-- Gen 30:22 Who do we see again enter the picture? ** God

--- But had He been in the picture, so to speak, all along? ** yes, of course!

--- Who did God listen to this time? ** Rachel

--- It says that God remembered Rachel; would He actually have forgotten her? ** of course not

--- So what does that mean? ** I think it means that now was the time in God's plan for Him to listen to Rachel's prayers

--- And what did God do as He remembered and listened to Rachel? ** He opened her womb

*-- Gen. 30:23-24 So what long desired event finally happens? ** Rachel has a child -- a son

--- Why, v. 22? ** because God had remembered her, had heard her prayers and allowed her to conceive

--- What was Rachel's reaction to the fact that she had finally had a son? ** that God had taken away her reproach

=== It was often considered a sign of shame if a woman couldn't have children. And, of course, a son was much to be desired.

--- Who named this son? ** Rachel

--- What did she name him? ** Joseph

--- What does Joseph mean? ** "adding"

--- Why did she name this baby "Adding"? ** it sounds like she is saying that the Lord has given her a son and will "add" another one to her

=== But I'm not sure whether that is in anticipation of having another baby after this or that she is saying that Joseph is added to the two sons she already has by Bilhah.

*-- Gen. 30:25-26 When does this take place? ** about the time Joseph was born

--- To whom does Jacob speak in v. 25? ** to his uncle/father-in-law Laban

--- What does Jacob want? ** to take his family and go home

--- So does he just pack up and leave? ** no, he asks permission of his father-in-law

--- Why did Jacob wait until Joseph was born? ** it seems to have nothing to do with the birth of Joseph; Joseph just seems to have been born at the end of the 7 more years of work that Jacob had promised Laban he'd do for Rachel after the deception of being given Leah

--- So how long had Jacob been away from home? ** 14 years

=== According to my figures, Jacob was about 91 at this time (77 when he left home plus 14 years of working for Laban), which would have made all of the other sons being born in a period of 7 years. But let's not get bogged down here with this.

--- What does Jacob remind Laban of? ** that Laban knew that he had worked for him

--- So why does Jacob seem to think he has a right to take his wives and children and leave Laban and go back to Canaan? ** because he had worked for them as he'd promised

*-- Gen. 30:27-28 Does Laban want Jacob to leave? ** no

--- How had things gone which Laban while Jacob was working for him and overseeing his flocks? ** Laban had evidently prospered

--- For what reason does Laban think this prosperity has been? ** that God favored Jacob and had been blessing Laban because of Jacob

--- So why doesn't Laban want Jacob to leave? ** it sounds as if Laban figures that the Lord will continue blessing him if Jacob stays

--- How does Laban propose to keep Jacob there? ** asks him what pay he'd like to stay on

--- Does Laban sound polite or rude? ** polite

--- By the way, does Laban mention anything about not wanting to lose his daughters and grandchildren? ** no

=== Though perhaps in his mind he included that in the blessings that God had given him while Jacob was there. We can't really know his thoughts.

*-- Gen. 30:29-30 Now who is talking in these verses? ** Jacob

--- What is the first thing that Jacob reminds Laban of? ** how well he had worked for Laban and how well Laban's flocks had done under his care

--- How prosperous had Laban been in his herds before Jacob took care of them? ** evidently Laban hadn't had much in the way of flocks before

== At least they had been of a number that his daughter Rachel could handle.

--- How were Laban's herd doing now since Jacob had been tending them for 14 years? ** they'd turned into a multitude of animals

--- Does Jacob take all of the credit for this increase in herds? ** no, he acknowledges that God had brought the increase

--- What concerns Jacob now? ** the fact that he doesn't have any herds of his own with which to support his family himself

*-- Gen. 30:31-33 Does Laban still seem to want Jacob to stay? ** yes

--- What makes you say that? ** because he asks him what wages he wants and he'll give him what he asks for

--- Does Jacob want to be just given herds? ** no, he wants to work for them

--- How does Jacob propose to do this? ** by going among Laban's flocks and choosing certain colors for himself: spotted goats and sheep and brown (black) sheep

=== This may have included the striped or "pinto" ones, too.

=== I don't know, but I heard somewhere that these colorings were less desirable in animals and less common, so he would be taking an inferior animal that came in smaller numbers.

--- But what advantage would Jacob have in taking these off-color animals? ** so that he can never be accused of having stolen any of Laban's animals, which could be done if he had ones the same as Laban's; they'd be very distinctive

--- So what would Jacob have to do if his spotted animals gave birth to solid white babies? ** give them to Laban

--- And if they ever found any nice, solid white goats or sheep among his flocks, what did he say they could figure? ** that he'd stolen them

--- So does Jacob sound as if he's being honest or sneaky here? ** very honest

--- Does this sound like a good system to you? ** to me it does

*-- Gen. 30:34-36 Is this plan agreeable to Laban? ** yes

--- Do they wait long to put this plan into effect? ** no, that day

--- Who seems to have done the separating of the animals? ** Laban

=== Now, some people think that this means that Laban sneaked in and quickly took all of the spotted, etc. animals and kept them for himself, sending them far away where Jacob couldn't get them. But my son checked it out in the Hebrew, and it just doesn't seem that way. It seems that the two of them, Jacob and Laban, agreed that Jacob would have all of the mismatched animals, so then Laban oversaw the separation of them.

--- Did they keep the 2 flocks, together? ** no, they put a distance of 3 days journey between them

=== That would be quite a few miles between Laban's animals and Jacob's animals.

--- Who does it seem was to take care of the multicolored animals? ** Laban's sons

--- So does it seem that Laban had more children than just two daughters? ** yes

--- And whose animals are Laban's sons taking care of? ** Jacob's

--- Who does it seem was to take care of Laban's animals? ** Jacob

=== It doesn't say about the flocks that Laban's sons were watching, but I imagine that the lambs would be separated out into white and spotted, just as with the flocks that Jacob was watching for Laban.

*-- Gen. 30:37-40 Now that the flocks are separated and he's caring for Laban's solid colored sheep and goats, what does v. 37 say that Jacob did? ** took fresh straight branches from certain trees and peeled them in a way so that they looked as if they were striped

--- Then what did Jacob do with these striped rods, v. 38? ** he put them in the watering troughs

--- And what did the animals evidently do there at the watering troughs besides just drink water? ** they mated

--- And what was in front of them as they mated? ** those peeled rods

--- What was the result of these matings, v. 39? ** striped, spotted, and speckled lambs!

--- So what is Jacob actually trying to do with these rods? ** influence the breeding of the animals so that they will produce more of the kind that he will be able to keep

--- Did Jacob's plan work? ** yes

--- Now, does this seem the honest thing for Jacob to have done? ** not to me!

=== Also, it doesn't seem to me that this of itself would have anything to do with what kind of lamb would be born!
--- But what actually would have caused these spotted lambs to be born, Jacob's deceit or what? ** no, God would have been giving Jacob more flocks
--- Then what did Jacob do with these spotted lambs, v. 40? ** separated them out as his own
=== I'm confused about v. 40. But I think it just boils down to the fact that he's separating the flocks into two flocks, his (spotted, etc.) and Laban's (solid color).
*-- Gen. 30:41-43 How else did Jacob try to get better flocks for himself, v. 41? ** by only using the rods to influence the strong animals
--- But what about the not so strong animals, v. 42? ** he didn't put the rods down with them
--- So what would eventually be the result in the herds of all of this? ** Jacob would have more and stronger animals, and Uncle Laban would have fewer and weaker animals
--- But again, if Jacob were to get rich, how would he really get rich? ** God's blessings
--- By the way, is this wealth going to endear Jacob with his uncle and male cousins? ** no
--- But are we told if they knew of the deceit he was practicing? ** no
--- What did Jacob's financial situation become, v. 43? ** he got very rich with slaves, sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys
--- What kind of animals had Jacob bargained for, v. 32? ** it sounds like just the sheep and goats
--- We aren't told, but I can't help but wonder how he would have gotten all of these slaves and camels and donkeys; any ideas? ** all I can think of is that he traded or sold some of his sheep and goats for them
--- Incidentally, would Jacob have been by himself as he took care of those flocks? ** no
=== So I'm wondering if he had his own slaves there helping him with his flocks. Not Laban's men who would probably "rat" on him about the striped rods.

REVIEW:
-- This chapter can be divided into 2 big parts; what in just a sentence or two, are they? ** (1) the birth of the rest of Jacob's children and (2) Jacob's getting rich
-- How many children did Jacob end up with in this chapter and what sex are they? ** 11 sons and 1 daughter
-- How many wives did he end up with? ** 4
-- How did that come about? ** he'd married both of Laban's daughters, then each had him marry her handmaid to have children by them
-- How many children did Leah herself have? ** 7, 6 sons and 1 daughter
-- How many does Rachel herself have in this chapter? ** 1
-- And the handmaids? ** 2 each
-- Which handmaid belongs to which wife? ** Leah-Zilpah; Rachel-Bilhah
-- What did Jacob want to do after having worked 14 years for his cousins/wives? ** he wanted to go home
-- Why did Laban say he wanted Jacob to stay? ** because he'd seen that the Lord was blessing him and making him rich because of Jacob
-- What wages did Jacob say he'd take if he stayed longer? ** all of the spotted and dark colored sheep and goats
-- So the flocks were separated and who took care of Laban's white flocks? ** Jacob
-- But what deceit did Jacob then practice? ** he tried to influence the breeding of the sheep and goats by striped rods and using them only with the strong animals

-- Did this apparently work? ** yes
-- But why, actually, would this work? ** because the Lord was making Jacob rich

APPLICATIONS:

** Polygamy is awful!
** Children are a blessing and something to be desired.
** We get rich through God's blessings.
** We really shouldn't practice deceit.
** We can't always trust even relatives!
** If we are godly, we may be a blessing to others.

Chapter 31: Jacob leaves Laban; covenant with Laban

=== Let's just have a few review questions:

-- Where is Jacob living now? ** Haran

-- How big is his family? ** 4 wives, 12 children

-- What sex are they? ** 11 sons and 1 daughter

-- For what is he now working? ** herds

-- At least how long has he been in Haran that we've read about so far? ** at least 14 yrs

*-- Gen. 31:1 Now who enter the picture? ** Laban's sons

--- What evil human emotion was showing itself in them? ** jealousy

--- What do they say that Jacob has done? ** taken away their father's herds and become rich

--- But was Jacob actually stealing Laban's herds? ** no

--- What was actually happening? ** more and more of the striped and spotted and dark colored animals are being born, and these were to belong to Jacob

--- Are we told whether Laban's sons know about the striped rods that Jacob was using to try to influence the kind of lambs to be born? ** no

--- Were they just thinking these thoughts about Jacob to themselves? ** no, they were saying it

--- And who heard about what Laban's sons were saying? ** Jacob

--- Do we know how he heard, in person or someone told him? ** no, we aren't told

*-- Gen. 31:2 Jacob has heard what Laban's sons were saying, but who does he observe? ** his Uncle Laban

--- How had Laban evidently been toward Jacob before this? ** friendly

--- But what does Jacob observe now? ** that Laban doesn't seem friendly anymore

--- Again, are we told whether or not Laban was aware of the deceit that Jacob is practicing with the striped rods in trying to get richer in herds? ** no

=== But at least Laban and his sons see that fewer and fewer lambs are being born that they can keep, and they're jealous.

*-- Gen. 31:3 Who now enters the picture? ** the Lord

--- What does the Lord tell Jacob to do about this bad family situation? ** to go back home to Canaan to his relatives

--- What very comforting promise does God give Jacob? ** that He would be with Jacob

*-- Gen. 31:4-5 Who does Jacob tell about this unfriendly feeling that is developing? ** his wives, Laban's daughters

--- Where does he tell them? ** out in the field

--- Why might he have told them out in there? ** one wonders if he were afraid of being overheard if he talked over any plans at home in or near the tents

--- Did he take them away from the tents and just wander out into the fields with them? ** no, he seems to have been with the flocks and to have sent for them

--- Did he also have his two concubines come out and tell them? ** no

--- We aren't told, but why might he not have been consulting them, also? ** they were just slaves, second class wives, and they'd have to do whatever they were told

--- But Who does Jacob say had been with him all of this time? ** God

*-- Gen. 31:6-7 How hard had Jacob worked for Laban? ** "with all of his power"

--- Had the sisters been aware of this? ** yes, they knew it

--- For what had Jacob worked the first 14 years? ** for Rachel

--- And had Laban evidently been friendly during that time? ** yes

--- How had Laban done financially (in herds) during that 14 years? ** very well, gotten rich

--- But now for what was Jacob working? ** for herds of his own

=== And this is when Laban and his sons become unfriendly.

--- What word does Jacob use to describe how Laban had treated him, v. 7? ** deceived or cheated

--- So, while Jacob had been working hard for Laban, what had Laban done, how had he cheated him? ** Laban had changed Jacob's wages

--- How many times, according to Jacob? ** "10 times"

=== Of course, that could just mean "a lot of times." But evidently Laban had changed Jacob's wages more than twice.

--- But again, Who had been in control of the situation? ** God

*-- Gen. 31:8-9 How had Laban been changing Jacob's wages? ** by changing the kind of animal that would be Jacob's

--- Why would Laban do that? ** it seems that no matter what kind of animals were to go to Jacob, that lots more of that kind were born; Laban would see that and want that kind for himself; the pattern repeated itself several times, evidently

--- But, again, Who was really in control of this? ** God

--- In essence, what had God accomplished in doing this? ** given most of Laban's herds to Jacob by having the kind of lambs that Jacob could keep be born

--- So how was Laban now doing financially in herds? ** quite poorly

--- What had the Lord told Abraham and then Isaac passed on to Jacob about those who either blessed or cursed them? ** that the Lord would bless those who blessed them and curse those who cursed them

=== So, even though Jacob was trying to influence the birth of the lambs, Laban was not being fair to Jacob, and the Lord didn't like that.

--- Does that mean, though, that Jacob was justified in using the striped rods? ** I don't think so

=== Okay, let's stop moralizing here and go on with the story! Jacob has called his wives out to the field and told them that their father doesn't seem friendly toward him anymore but that the Lord has protected him.

*-- Gen. 31:10-12 Who is still talking here? ** Jacob

--- What strange vision did Jacob tell his wives about, v.10? ** The bi-colored rams breeding with the females

--- Then, as Jacob is telling his wives this vision, Who does Jacob say had spoken to him, v. 11? ** God

--- Why did God say that this was happening about the rams who were mating and that they were bi-colored, v. 12? ** because God had seen how Laban was treating him

--- So why would God be showing Jacob this? ** so that Jacob would know that God had given him the herds and not the chicanery of Jacob with the rods

*-- Gen. 31:13 Jacob is still telling his wives about his vision; Who is speaking in the vision he tells about? ** God

=== Then God identifies Himself.

--- What identification did God use ** that He was the God who had appeared to Jacob at Bethel

--- Why would the Lord say this? ** remember, everywhere there were local "gods"; this God wasn't local; He was God of Canaan and God of Syria

--- Then what did God remind Jacob that Jacob had done at Bethel? ** anointed the stone, the pillar and made a vow to Him

--- Why might God have given these details to Jacob? ** so that Jacob would really know This was the same God as before, sort of a proof, and that Jacob could trust Him to keep His promises

--- What did Jacob tell his wives that God had told him to do? ** go back to his own country

--- Are we actually given this vision that Jacob tells his wives, or are we just told that Jacob told his wives about the vision? ** we're just told that Jacob told his wives about it

--- However, are we told that God Himself actually told Jacob to leave? ** yes, v. 3

--- For this reason some people think that Jacob was just making the vision up, but is there really any reason to think that? ** I don't think so

--- Why not? ** Jacob could just have told his wives that things weren't looking good and that he'd decided they'd better go back; I don't think he needed to make up about a vision

=== I have a footnote that says that the Samaritan text gives this vision back in chapter 30. However, I don't know anything about the Samaritan text. And, again, Jacob didn't need to make this up that I can see.

*-- Gen. 31:14-15 Who now answers Jacob? ** both Rachel and Leah

--- What do they seem to feel about their marriages according to v. 15? ** that they were sold to Jacob

--- Why would they feel that way? ** Jacob had had a choice of wages, but he had taken them instead of money; they were his "wages"

=== In those lands a man would pay for his wife. Then the girl's father would give whatever the man had paid for her back to the daughter as a dowry. If there were a divorce, the dowry went with the woman. She could leave her dowry as an inheritance to her own children. Evidently Laban had had Jacob work those 14 years, which was certainly worth a lot. Whatever riches Laban had accumulated from Jacob's good work, Laban had kept for himself, and then he hadn't given his daughters a dowry of their own. Therefore, they regarded themselves as having been treated as a "stranger", a non-relative, and sold as a slave might have been.

*-- Gen. 31:16 So what do Rachel and Leah decide will be their dowries? ** the riches that God has given Jacob at the expense of their father

--- And, again, Who do they figure had given Jacob these riches of their father? ** God

--- How might that have worked, that Jacob got Laban's riches? ** God had made the kind of animal that was to be Jacob's to be born instead of ones that Laban would keep

=== To me it seems that they sound pretty bitter about their father's treatment of them.

--- So what do Rachel and Leah tell Jacob to do? ** whatever God had told him to do

--- Which was what, back to the end of v. 13? ** to go back to his homeland

--- For once, at least, do Rachel and Leah seem to be agreed on something? ** yes

--- By the way, when it gives the two wives' names in v. 4 and 14, which wife is listed first? ** Rachel

--- But which was the first wife? ** Leah

=== I find it a little strange, then, that Leah wasn't listed first, even though Rachel was the preferred wife. Also, I find it interesting that Jacob consulted his wives. He didn't just tell them that he had decided to leave. Of course, perhaps he was afraid they wouldn't want to leave their relatives and might make a fuss which Laban would hear. But at least this way he has their cooperation.

*-- Gen. 31:17-18 So what did Jacob do? ** packed up everything he had and left

--- Where was he going? ** back home to Daddy Isaac

--- How were the wives and children traveling? ** on camel back

--- What about all of those herds he had? ** he took them along with him

--- Would this have been a simple leaving, one that would go unnoticed? ** hardly!

--- In fact, could this departure have been arranged and carried out in just a few minutes? ** no

=== I don't know if it would have taken a couple of hours or a day or so, but we can be sure that Jacob was moving quickly.

--- Would he be able to travel quickly with all of those herds? ** no

*-- Gen. 31:19 Where was Laban while Jacob was packing up and leaving? ** out shearing his flocks

=== At first reading, it just sounds as if Laban were just out in the back yard where he'd surely have been able to see what was going on.

--- But back in 30:36, how far apart were Laban's and Jacob's herds? ** 3 days

=== Also, we aren't told whether Jacob just got ready and left immediately after talking to his wives or whether he waited until Laban was gone.

--- What did Rachel take with her? ** her father Laban's "images"

--- How many were there? ** more than one

--- So evidently, how close to Laban's home did Jacob and his family live? ** right next to them or with them in the same compound

=== It sounds as if the wives and children lived "at home", while the men went out into the fields and took care of the flocks

=== We don't really know just what these images or teraphim were. But they were some sort of household god. Also, we aren't told why Rachel stole these. It could have been that she felt she was entitled to something. Or there is good reason from tablets found in excavations to think that these images showed that whoever had them owned the riches, sort of like possessing the deed to a house. Whatever Rachel's reason, it was not a friendly act!

*-- Gen. 31:20-21 Well, had Jacob told Laban that he was leaving before his uncle went of sheep shearing? ** no

--- We aren't told here, but why didn't he tell Laban? ** so that Laban couldn't stop him from leaving or take his herds or wives and children away from him; he didn't want any trouble

--- Does Jacob seem to have had much faith in Laban's honorable actions? ** no, otherwise he wouldn't have sneaked away

--- Was Jacob's departure a dignified one? ** no, the Bible says he sneaked away, that he ran away, fled

--- What direction did he head? ** south, towards Gilead

=== Gilead is the area between the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee and the northern part of the Dead Sea and then east of the Jordan River. It is good pasture land.

--- What geological barrier does it say that he crossed? ** the Euphrates

=== The KJ says "the river", but that would mean the Euphrates. Haran was just north of it, so he would have to go south of the Euphrates in order to head home.

*-- Gen. 31:22-23 How long had Jacob been gone before Laban heard about it? ** 3 days

--- How did Laban find out? ** someone evidently told him

=== Now, we aren't told if it took someone 3 days to go from where Jacob had been to where Laban was, or if the person waited a couple of days before starting out, or just what. But my guess, since Jacob was a smart man, would be that Jacob had waited until Laban was way north with his sheep before Jacob took off.

--- What did Laban do about it? ** chased after him

--- Did Laban go alone? ** no, he took relatives with him

--- Why? ** reinforcements!

--- How long did Laban chase Jacob before catching up with him? ** 7 days

--- So at least how many days had Jacob been fleeing before Uncle Laban caught up with him? ** at least 10 (3 + 7)

=== However, it could have been even longer than that, depending on how far away Laban had been with his sheep shearing and how long it took him to get his army together.

--- If Jacob had at least a 3 days' head start on Laban and must have been travel as quickly as he could, how was Laban able to catch up with him? ** Jacob had all of his herds with him which had to go slowly, and Laban was just a pursuing army

=== I think it had to have been longer than just 10 days between the time Jacob left and the time that Laban caught up with him, because from I can figure the distance would have been about 350 miles, and I don't see how Jacob could have pushed his herds enough to have covered that distance in just 10 days. A good day's march for an infantryman is 15 miles. But we're talking about 35 miles a day!

--- Now let's do a little figuring! We're going to find out later in this chapter that Jacob had worked 6 years for his herds. How long would Jacob have been living with and working for his Uncle Laban? ** 20 years (7 years for each wife plus 6 for the herds)

--- So about how old would Jacob have been at this time that he's fleeing with his family? ** about 97 yrs

--- About how old would Laban have been? ** Laban had to have been at least 15 when Abraham's servant came up and got Rebekah, because he had quite a say so in what was going on. Then Rebekah was barren 20 years before having the twins. Then Jacob was about 97 at the time. Therefore, 15 + 20 + 97 = 132 years old is the very youngest Laban could have been at the time that he's out chasing down his nephew!

--- Where did Laban catch up with Jacob? ** the mountain of Gilead

=== From what I can figure, this is a hilly area except right up by the Jordan. There seem to be two "peaks" about 4000 feet tall in this area.

*-- Gen. 31:24 What "religious experience" did Laban have that night? ** God came to him in a dream

--- What did God tell Laban? ** "be careful what you say to Jacob"

=== Remember, Laban had admitted when Jacob had wanted to leave after having been there only 14 years that God had blessed him with more herds since Jacob was there because of Jacob. So Laban may be a real believer, or he just may be clever and recognize God's blessings when he sees them. But he knows something about this God, and he knows that God is partial to Jacob.

*-- Gen. 31:25-26 OK, Laban has chased after Jacob; again, did he finally catch up with him? ** yes

--- Where? ** in the hill country of Gilead

=== So both Jacob and Laban are camped there, though we aren't told if Jacob knew yet that Laban was there. Then Laban has been warned by God really to be careful about what he says to Jacob.

--- So how did Laban start out in his description of how Jacob had left? ** asked him why he'd sneaked away

--- How did Laban describe how Jacob had acted toward Laban's daughters? ** treated them like the spoils of war, carrying them away as captives

*-- Gen. 31:27-28 Again, how does Laban describe Jacob's departure? ** as a secret fleeing, a deception

--- It that an accurate description? ** yes

--- But then what does Laban say that Jacob hadn't even allowed, v. 27? ** for Laban to give them a going-away party

--- And then in v. 28, what does Laban complain about? ** that he didn't even get to kiss his daughters and grandkids goodby

=== We can't actually read Laban's mind, but let's think about that a minute.

--- Now, had Laban just gone traveling by himself to catch up with his daughters and grandchildren and kiss them and hug them goodby? ** no

--- Who did he have with him? ** his relatives

--- And what had the Lord warned Laban about? ** that he be careful how he spoke to Jacob

--- So would it seem on the surface of things that this was all that was bothering Laban, that he hadn't been able to send them all off with a party and proper farewells? ** it wouldn't seem so to me!

=== Again, we won't attempt to read Laban's mind and figure out if he would actually have been willing to let Jacob go, giving him a big party. That would be pure speculation and non-productive, so let's just go on with what we can know.

*-- Gen. 31:29 What did Laban say he could do if he felt like it? ** hurt Jacob

--- Why would he have been able to? ** because he had a relative-army with him

--- Then why doesn't he just go ahead and do it? ** because of what God told him

--- Does it sound to you as if God had figured that Laban had planned on being at least unpleasant? ** it does to me

--- So, again, does it sound as if saying a good farewell to his daughters and grandchildren is why Laban had chased off after them? ** not to me

--- By the way, what God does Laban say spoke to him? ** the God of Jacob's father

=== I find the wording interesting, but I don't think this is 100% proof that Laban was or wasn't a believer in the Lord. Perhaps that was a polite way of talking. We'll run into this thought again, though, a little later on.

--- But so far does it sound as if Laban is paying attention to what the Lord told him? ** yes

*-- Gen. 31:30 Does Laban seem to feel that it was at all natural for Jacob to have wanted to leave him? ** yes

--- What reason does Laban give for Jacob's actions? ** he would want to see his father and his homeland

--- Now, when Laban had been told about Jacob's running off with his family and herds, what else had evidently been told to Laban? ** that his images were missing

--- So what does Laban accuse Jacob of? ** stealing his gods

=== The Hebrew word is "elohiym", the same word that is often used of the Lord. It can also mean just "gods" with a small "g", or "judge."

--- Was Laban justified in making an accusation there? ** yes, the images were gone

=== Again, this makes me wonder as to Laban's salvation, but I don't think we have enough to go on, so let's just continue with the story.

*-- Gen. 31:31-32 Jacob now answers Laban's questions in the order that Laban had asked them. First, what explanation does Jacob give for his secret leaving? ** he was afraid that Laban would forcibly take his daughters back

=== He was certainly blunt, but at least he was honest!

--- What does Jacob have to say about the images? ** if Laban finds them, then whoever has them will die

=== He sounds pretty certain that they aren't there, doesn't he?! But stop and think. Either Jacob was very sure that no one had them, or else he considered the images a very important matter.

--- This is speculation, I know, but if Jacob had suspected that Rachel had the images, do you think he would have said this? ** I don't

--- What did Jacob say about if anything else of Laban's turns up? ** Laban was to take it back with him

--- So, had Jacob sneaked off with Laban's herds that he was watching? ** no, just his own

--- Had Jacob gone through and taken any of Laban's other things? ** no

--- Who is to be witness to this? ** Laban's relatives that are with him

--- So, had Jacob helped Rachel steal the images? ** no

--- In fact, had he even known they were missing? ** no

--- Again, what does it call Rachel's act? ** theft

*-- Gen. 31:33 Did Laban just take Jacob's word for it that he didn't have the images? ** no, he started searching the tents

=== Now we get a few details on the household arrangement.

--- Whose tent did he search first? ** Jacob's

--- Who else had separate tents of their own? ** Leah and Rachel and each concubine

--- So did the whole family live together in one "house", so to speak? ** no, the husband and each wife each had his own tent

=== A pretty wise arrangement, I'd say!

--- Have we heard before of a husband and wife having separate tents? ** yes, Abraham and Sarah

*-- Gen. 31:34 So whose tent is Laban in here? ** his daughter Rachel's

--- What was Rachel doing as her father came in? ** sitting down

--- What was she sitting on that Laban could probably see? ** the camel's saddle

--- But what was hidden under the saddle? ** Laban's images

--- So did Laban find them? ** no

=== We can at least get an idea of their size, since they are small enough to be hidden on the trip and under the saddle.

*-- Gen. 31:35 How did Rachel act with her father? ** very respectfully

--- Did she stand up when he came in? ** no

--- Does it seem that this would have been the accepted behavior, to stand up when her father came in? ** yes

--- What excuse, though, does Rachel give to staying seated? ** that "the custom of women was upon her"

--- What does that mean? ** she was having her monthly period

=== I can't help but wonder about that! Surely they didn't sit down the entire time of their periods! Maybe she feigned cramps! We just aren't told.

=== By the way, imagine how Rachel must have felt when her father came in to search her tent. What if he'd been in a bad mood and told her to stand up anyway?!

--- But did Laban go ahead and search the rest of Rachel's tent? ** yes

=== Perhaps he felt he'd better be careful what he said to Jacob's wives, too!

*-- Gen. 31:36 Now that the search is over, what is Jacob's reaction? ** anger

--- Who does he vent his anger on? ** Laban

--- What does he ask Laban? ** what Jacob's sin had been that he'd chased after him like that

*-- Gen. 31:37 How much of Jacob's stuff had Laban evidently searched through trying to find his images? ** all of it

--- Then what does the angry Jacob ask Laban? ** if, after all that searching, if Laban had found anything that belonged to Laban

--- What does Jacob tell Laban to do if he had found anything he thought was his? ** to bring it out so everyone could see it and decide whose it really was

=== So here Jacob's been accused of theft! Jacob all but says, "OK, what did you find! Let's see anything I've stolen! Nothing! Why'd you have to go poking through my things? Have I treated you dishonestly before?"

--- So do you think that Jacob pretty much had a right to be angry? ** yes

*-- Gen. 31:38 Now we find out how long Jacob had worked for Laban; what was the total number of years? ** 20

--- What does Jacob say about the female sheep and goats of Laban's that he had been taking care of? ** they hadn't cast their young

--- What does it mean "ewes and she goats didn't cast young?" ** that Laban's animals hadn't miscarried while Jacob was taking care of them.

=== This, of course, is one of the blessings of God that Laban had observed he had because of Jacob.

--- Had Jacob acted honorably while shepherding his father-in-law's flocks? ** yes, very

--- Had he killed any of them for dinner while he was out in the fields? ** no

=== This reminds me of when Jacob many years before had been making pottage out in the fields. The shepherds didn't just kill a lamb every time they were hungry.

*-- Gen. 31:39-40 What had happened if a wolf caught one of Laban's lambs? ** Jacob had replaced it with one of his own

--- Did Jacob first go to Laban with it and explain that some wild animal had gotten it? ** no, he just replaced it

--- Had Laban evidently figured that some theft or eating by wild animals of the flocks was just part of life and said to let it go? ** no, if any were missing he had held Jacob responsible

--- Had the shepherd's life been comfortable for Jacob? ** no, it was hot by day and cold by night, and he never had enough sleep

*-- Gen. 31:41 Again Jacob brings up how long he had worked for Laban; again, how long total? ** 20 years

=== It sounds to me as if Jacob is not only still angry but is feeling cheated and let's Laban know about it. He repeats the "20 years".

--- Then Jacob breaks it down; how long had he worked for what? ** 14 years for Leah and Rachel plus 6 years for his herds

=== Notice how he didn't say 7 years for each. After all, he hadn't wanted Leah in the first place!

--- By the way, to look at this another way, how long had Jacob been away from his parents and home? ** 20 years

=== Rebekah's "few days" had turned into 20 years!

--- What does Jacob say that Laban did? ** changed his wages 10 times

--- Does that sound either honest or friendly on Laban's part? ** not to me

*-- Gen. 31:42 Now, according to this verse, who had been on Jacob's side? ** the God of Abraham and the "fear of Isaac"

--- Whose God? ** Abraham's

--- What does the "fear of Isaac" mean? ** "the One whom Isaac fears"

--- Who would that be? ** the Lord

--- So whose God had been on Jacob's side? ** Abraham's and Isaac's

--- Are They the same God? ** yes

--- Then what does Jacob accuse Laban of having wanted to do? ** to only let Jacob go with nothing to show for his 20 years of toil

=== It doesn't actually give the details here, but let's think about that.

--- Does this sound to you as that if Jacob had been able to leave Laban from Haran, that there was reason to believe that Laban would have kept all of Jacob's wives and children and herds that he'd worked for and his other riches? ** yes

=== Perhaps with that or there would have been a war between them.

--- But Jacob has those with him; so what does it sound as if Laban might have earlier been thinking of doing when he caught up with him? ** taking it all away from Jacob, leaving Jacob with nothing to take back home with him

--- So does Laban seem to have been an honest man? ** not particularly

--- Why didn't Laban have the chance to take everything away from Jacob now? ** he was afraid of God

--- When had he learned this fear of God that kept him from robbing Jacob blind once he caught up with him? ** just the night before in a vision!

--- What does Jacob say is the reason that the Lord cautioned Laban? ** because God had seen Jacob's affliction and how hard he had worked for Laban

--- Who does this intimate had been afflicting Jacob? ** Uncle Laban

*-- Gen. 31:43-44 So Laban has listened to Jacob's angry tirade; does Laban just quietly go away? ** no, he answers Jacob

--- What does Laban then call Jacob's wives and children? ** his (Laban's) own

--- Was that in a sense true? ** yes, they were his daughters and grandchildren

--- But what else does Laban say was his? ** Jacob's herds

--- How might he have been able to say that? ** because Jacob had gotten them from Laban, even though he had worked for them

--- So how does Laban protest his innocence? ** "how could I hurt my own children and herds?!"

=== Pretty smooth!

--- So what does Laban suggest they do? ** make a peace treaty

*-- Gen. 31:45-46 Who seems to have given the directions for making this peace treaty? ** Jacob

--- What did Jacob do himself to get ready to make the covenant? ** set a stone up for a pillar

--- Then what did Jacob have his in-laws do? ** make a pile of rocks

=== They may each just have brought one to represent himself, but we aren't really told the details. Also, it isn't clear to me whether the pillar stone was a part of this pile, all piled together, or whether they were sort of separate.

--- Then what did they do? ** ate their dinner there by the heap of rocks

=== The KJ says "upon the heap", whereas the NAS and NIV say "by the heap." Whichever it was, the heap was very close to them and was part of the ceremony.

--- Where have we had other covenants made with meals involved? ** (1) in a sense, the divided sacrifice of Abraham might be considered a meal, (2) Isaac, Abimelech, and the wells and mutual peace treaty, (3) in a sense, the blessing of Isaac to Jacob

--- By the way, where else have we heard about Jacob's setting up a stone for a pillar? ** at Bethel 20 years earlier after he had the vision of the ladder to heaven and the Lord's speaking to him

*-- Gen. 31:47-48 The two men named the pile of rocks; what did Laban call it? ** Jegarsahadutha

--- Do you have a footnote that tells what this means? ** the heap of witness

=== This is the Chaldean or Aramaic language, according to my footnote.

--- What did Jacob name the pile of rocks? ** Galeed

--- Do you have a footnote that tells what this means? ** the heap of witness

=== My footnote says this is Hebrew. So they named the pile the same thing, each in his own "native" language. By the way, that is a different word from "Gilead". "Gilead" means to be rough. They sound pretty much the same to us, but they're not even related words.

--- Which man explains why they named this pile of rocks "the heap of witness? ** Laban

--- And what was the reason? ** because it was to be a witness that they were making a treaty with each other

--- What good would that pile of rocks be; how could it be a witness? ** whenever either of them came there and saw it, they would remember the treaty they were about to make

=== So I'd think it wasn't just a handful of pebbles. They were big stones, making a notable pile.

*-- Gen. 31:49 What other name was given to the pile of rocks? ** Mizpah

--- Do you have a footnote that says what this means? ** watchtower

--- Now, again, what was the purpose of the pile of rocks? ** it stood there as a reminder or witness to their treaty

--- Who did Laban say would watch between them? ** the Lord

--- When did Laban want the Lord to watch between them? ** when they were separated from each other

=== So this first part of this treaty is a very sweet sounding sentence. It is often now used between dear friends who want to remember each other when they are apart. But let's see just what the word "Mizpah" stood for then.

--- So why is this pile of rocks also named "watchtower"? ** because it was to be a watchtower witnessing that God was watching them

=== But there is more to it than that. So let's look further.

*-- Gen. 31:50 Now who does Laban bring into this treaty? ** his 2 daughters

--- Who had trickily worked it so that Jacob had more than more wife? ** Laban

--- So, Laban had forced Jacob into bigamy; what does he now expect of Jacob? ** that he not take any other wives than Laban's daughters

=== I guess concubines were all right, or at least the 2 that he had.

--- What else concerning Laban's daughters? ** that Jacob is not to mistreat them

--- Does this seem to show some fatherly affection to you? ** yes

=== The thing with Laban's tricking Jacob into marrying Leah might also have been that he wanted a good husband for Leah as well as for Rachel. Anyway, he did have some sort of fatherly regard for them.

--- But who would know if Jacob took other wives or mistreated the ones he had? ** God

*-- Gen. 31:51 What does Laban then call Jacob's attention to? ** the heap of rocks

--- What else is it called besides a heap? ** a pillar

=== I think the heap and pillar are the same thing, a bunch of stones piled up on top of each other. But Jacob's stone, the pillar, may possibly have stood separately from the heap of his relatives. Or it could have been that Jacob stood up a long, pillar-like stone, and then the other stones were piled around it to support it upright. We really aren't given the exact details.

--- Where did Laban say he'd had the heap set up? ** between them

*-- Gen. 51:52 What does Laban then say that this heap, this pillar (either together or separately), is? ** a witness to what their treaty would be

--- What does Laban say will be his part of the treaty? ** that he won't go beyond that pile of rocks to do Jacob any harm

--- And what, besides treating Laban's daughters well and not taking any more wives, was to be Jacob's part of the treaty? ** that he wouldn't go beyond the pile of rocks to do Laban any harm

=== We use "Mizpah" now as an expression of endearment meaning that we want God to take care of our loved ones while they are away.

--- But is that how Laban is using it here? ** no!

=== It was originally more of an expression with teeth in it, wasn't it? God is watching you, so be careful that you keep your promises -- and don't try to hurt me! The sentiment of the words used when people now talk about "Mizpah" is a good thing, but I'd say they are taken entirely out of context! But I see nothing wrong with people using it now as a sign of friendship.

*-- Gen. 31:53 Now, for this verse let's first simply take the facts that are given. After we've seen what the verse actually says, then we can look at some various ways it might be interpreted. But let's not mix things up before we get the facts! (There's a saying, "Just give me the facts; I'll mix them up myself!")

--- Who does Laban first call upon to witness their covenant with each other? ** the God of Abraham and Nahor

--- Where did Abraham come into the relationship here? ** Jacob's grandfather

--- And where did Nahor come into the relationship? ** Laban's grandfather

--- But whose God also was this God according to the next words? ** their father's

--- Who was their father? ** Terah

--- And what was Terah's relationship to both Jacob and Laban? ** their great-grandfather

--- But what did Jacob swear by in this treaty? ** by the fear of his father Isaac

--- What does that mean, "the fear of Isaac"? ** the One Whom Isaac feared, reverenced, in other words, the Lord God

--- Does it mention that Jacob swore by the God of Abraham or of Nahor or of Terah? ** no

=== All right now. Let's see how people might differ in their interpretation of this verse. I don't think we can reach a conclusion and say, "This is 100% correct." However, we will have something to think about. But first let's look at a verse in the book of Joshua.

*-- Josh. 24:2 What does this seem to indicate about Terah? ** that he may have been an idolater

=== I don't think it's 100% sure, but it's quite an indication.

--- What had Rachel stolen from her father Laban? ** some images

--- And what did these images seem to have been? ** some sort of household god, idols; though perhaps they also represented ownership of the house and its possessions

--- But what might we wonder about Laban's spiritual position? ** it sounds as if he may have been an idolater

=== Again, I don't think this is 100% sure, but again, quite an indication. Of course, he could have worshipped the Lord as well, sort of covered everything, but we really aren't told.

--- But Who did Abraham worship? ** the Lord God, the only true God

--- This is just speculation, but is there a chance that Abraham might also have been an idolater when he was young? ** I think so, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it

=== We don't know when Abraham was converted.

--- But then, back to Gen. 31:53, did Jacob swear by name by the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor and Terah? ** no

--- Who, by name, did Jacob swear by? ** the fear of his father Isaac

--- And Who is the only God that Isaac worshipped? ** the Lord God, the only true God

=== So I see that this verse could mean one of 3 things: (1) Abraham, Nahor, and Terah all worshipped the one real God and Laban asked Jacob to swear by the one real God; or (2) Abraham worshipped the one real God, but Nahor and Terah worshipped idols, and Laban asked Jacob to swear by the one real God and these false gods; or (3) Laban is saying that Abraham (when younger, of course), Nahor, and Terah all worshipped false gods, and he's asking Jacob to swear by those false gods.

--- But no matter which of these 3 situations is the real case, how did Jacob settle the matter righteously but still not offend his father-in-law? ** he swore by the one real God by saying he swore by the fear of his father Isaac (who would be the son of Abraham and the grandson of Terah)

*-- Gen. 31:54-55 What did Jacob do after he and Laban made the covenant? ** made a sacrifice and made a feast

=== I don't know, but I wonder if this sacrifice involved the pillar that Jacob had set up. Remember, back in Bethel, Jacob had set his "pillow" up as a pillar and had poured oil on it after the Lord had spoken to him. This is just a thought on my part, though.

--- Who ate of Jacob's feast? ** his relatives who'd chased after him

--- Were they blood relatives as well as in-laws? ** yes

--- What did they all do after eating together? ** spent the night there together

--- Where was this? ** there in the hills of Gilead

=== This would have shown they trusted each other.

--- What happened the next morning? ** Laban kissed his daughters and grandchildren, blessed them, and left

--- Where did Laban go? ** back home to Padanaram

REVIEW:

-- In a sentence, what is this chapter about? ** Jacob's leaving Laban

-- Why did he leave? ** he saw his cousins were getting jealous and his uncle wasn't looking friendly any more

-- Who told Jacob what to do about it and what was it? ** God told him to go back home to Canaan

-- Who did Jacob consult about it and what was their reaction? ** Rachel and Leah; they agreed

-- Did Jacob just take his wives and children and start hiking? ** no, they rode camels, and he took all of his goods and herds

-- What happened a couple of weeks or so after Jacob left? ** angry Uncle Laban caught up with him

-- Do you think Laban carried out his original plan when he talked with Jacob, and your reasons? ** no, God had warned Laban to be careful what he said to Jacob

-- So what approach did Laban take? ** "you didn't let me say goodby -- and you stole my images to boot"

-- Who had the images? ** Rachel

-- Did Jacob know about it? ** no

-- Did Laban find them? ** no

-- What did Laban and Jacob finally do? ** make a peace treaty

-- And what do we have today from this peace treaty? ** "Mizpah"

APPLICATIONS:

** God is the one who makes people rich (the herds).

** We should be so honest in our dealing with others (even relatives!) that they can't reproach us in anything.

** God looks after His own.

** God sees us in our dealings even if others don't.

** We shouldn't make oaths by false gods.
** We should keep our eyes on the Lord and not be afraid.
** God provides in His time but will be with us in the meantime.

Chapter 32: Jacob Meets Esau; Wrestles with God

=== Let's have a few review questions so we know where we are.

-- Why had Jacob left his father's home in the first place? ** to escape the wrath of his brother after having taken the blessing of the first born by deception.

-- What pretense did Jacob's mother use to get Jacob out of Esau's way? ** Jacob needed to get married and shouldn't marry a Canaanite

=== There was probably some truth in that, as well!

-- So where did they send him? ** up to his mother's brother in Haran

-- How long did Jacob stay up with his Uncle Laban? ** 20 years

-- How did he leave ** he snuck off

--- And what happened when he left? ** Laban chased him down

-- Who secretly took something from Laban as they left, and what was it? ** Rachel took Laban's images

-- Why didn't Laban take all of the herds and his grandchildren away from Jacob? ** God had warned him in a dream to be careful

-- What did Laban and Jacob do after talking and Laban had searched in vain for his idols? ** made a peace treaty together

*-- Gen. 32: 1-2 As Jacob leaves the place of his peace treaty with his Uncle Laban, who meets him? ** an army of God's angels

--- Does Jacob realize what they are, angels? ** yes

--- What does Jacob name the place? ** Mahanaim

--- Do you have a footnote that tells what that means? ** "two camps"

--- Who had the two camps? ** Jacob had one camp, and the Lord's army had the other

--- What else are we told about this angelic army? ** absolutely nothing!

=== A somewhat similar thing happens to Joshua (Josh.5:14), but we aren't given any details there, either.

--- We aren't told, but what might have been the reason for Jacob's being able to see this heavenly army? my feeling is that this was to show Jacob that the Lord was really with him

=== We could speculate quite a while on this, but I can't see that it would get us anywhere, so we'll just go on.

*-- Gen. 32:3 Now that Jacob need no longer fear the wrath of his uncle from having stolen away secretly, with whom does Jacob decide to try to communicate? ** with his brother Esau

--- Why? ** he may well wonder if Esau is still angry with him or still plotting revenge

--- How does he try to communicate with Esau? ** he sends messengers ahead of him to Esau

--- Just one messenger? ** no, it is in the plural

--- So is Jacob just trying to sneak home and hope that his brother won't hear about it? ** no, he meets him head on by sending messengers ahead of him

--- Where would he get messengers to send? ** remember, he had lots of slaves with him

--- Where was Esau living now? ** in Seir in the country of Edom

--- Why would that country be called "Edom"? ** that's Esau's nickname

--- How did he get that nickname? ** it means "red," and he got it when he sold his birthright for a mess of red pottage

=== I find it interesting that Jacob knew to where to send the messenger. Esau had been over in Beersheba with Isaac when Jacob left. Seir is south and east of Beersheba. To me this indicates the possibility of Jacob's having had some news from home while he was up at Uncle Laban's.

--- By the way, about how old would the twins be now? ** almost 100 years old, about 97

=== I like to keep the ages in mind, as it gives me a better picture of what's happening. These aren't a couple of boys or men in their 30s.

*-- Gen. 32:4-5 Is Jacob's message a proud one or what? ** no, it's a very polite one, rather humble

--- What does he call Esau in this message? ** "my lord", "sir", "my master"

--- What does he call himself? ** Esau's servant, his slave

--- Where are the messengers to tell Esau that Jacob has been all of those 20 years? ** with Laban

--- What relationship would Laban be to Esau? ** his uncle

--- What are the messengers to say that Jacob is bringing back with him? ** oxen, donkeys, flocks, and men and women slaves

--- I would presume that "flocks" meant sheep and goats, but what other kind of animal did Jacob also possess, 30:43? ** camels

--- Now, why might Jacob be telling Esau about all of his riches? ** perhaps so that Esau won't wonder if Jacob is going to try to come back and claim everything for himself

--- By the way, what does Jacob not mention that he's bringing with him? ** 4 wives and 12 children

*-- Gen. 32:6 Do Jacob's messengers reach Esau? ** yes

--- So they bring back any verbal reply from Esau? ** no

--- What do the messengers say that Esau did after getting the message? ** saddled up to come meet Jacob

--- Was Esau coming alone? ** no, he had 400 men with him

*-- Gen. 32:7-8 What is Jacob's reaction to the reception that Esau gave to his message? ** Jacob's scared and upset

--- How does Jacob evidently take Esau's actions as probably being? ** as aggressive action on Esau's part, that he's unfriendly and is going to attack

--- Does Jacob seem to think that it's worthwhile to try to escape? ** no

--- What plan does Jacob put into action? ** he divides up the slaves and flocks into 2 large groups

--- Why? ** so that if Esau attacks one group of slaves and herds, the other will have a chance to escape

*-- Gen. 32:9 What wise action does Jacob take next? ** he prays!

--- What does he call God? ** the God of his father Abraham and of his father Isaac and the One Who had told him to go back and Who said He'd take care of him

=== Sort of a reminder to God about what God had promised!

--- Whose idea does Jacob seem to indicate that it was for Jacob to go back to Canaan? ** God's

*-- Gen. 32:10 How does Jacob say that God has acted toward him? ** with great kindness and trustworthiness

--- Does Jacob seem to think that he deserves all of this kindness? ** no, he calls himself unworthy of any of it

--- What had Jacob had with him when he left home 20 years earlier? ** just his walking stick

--- And what is he coming back with?** 2 encampments

--- Why two camps? ** he has enough stuff to divide up into two large groups of slaves and animals

-- What did Jacob say he had crossed as he left home in the first place with just his staff? ** the river Jordan

=== Notice that it gives us a hint of the route that Jacob had taken when he left home for Haran. He had crossed the Jordan river and gone north on the eastern side. I've heard that this would be an easier route than to go along the western side of the Jordan.

*-- Gen. 32:11-12 In the first 2 words of v. 11, what does Jacob ask for God to do for him? ** to deliver him

--- Deliver him from whom? ** his brother Esau

--- What is Jacob's fear? ** that Esau is going to come and kill him and wipe out his family

--- What does Jacob remind God of? ** that God had said that He would be good to Jacob and would give him innumerable descendants

--- Why would Jacob remind God of this in his hour of fear? ** (1) if they were all killed, it wouldn't be an act of kindness on God's part, and (2) if they were all wiped out, then his descendants wouldn't even exist

*-- Gen. 32:13-15 Did they move on during the night? ** no, they stayed there that night

--- Then what did Jacob do after setting up camp, v. 13? ** prepared a present for Esau

--- Of what did the present consist? ** 5 different herds totaling 580 animals: 200 she goats + 20 he goats, 200 ewes + 20 rams, 60 camels (30 milkers + babies), 40 cows + 10 bulls, 20 she donkeys + 10 colts

=== Just imagine the size of Jacob's herds if he could give a present like this! He must have had several thousand animals. And imagine the number of slaves he'd have to have to take care of all of them. This isn't just a little group of people and animals traveling all of those miles!

*-- Gen. 32:16 Who will have charge of these herds? ** Jacob's servants

--- How does Jacob arrange his present to his brother? ** in bits and pieces; his servants are to take separate herds and space them out

--- Does Jacob plan on giving this present to Esau personally? ** no, Esau will receive these gifts before they even meet

=== Jacob was about 100 years old but still very clever!

*-- Gen. 32:17-19 What does Jacob figure will be Esau's reaction when he sees these individual herds? ** he will be curious enough to stop and ask to whom the slaves belong and whose herds they are driving and where they are going

--- Then what conciliatory answers are the servants to give? ** "This is all Jacob's and he's sending it as a present to you"

--- Into at least how many groups are these herds divided? ** at least 3

--- Did Jacob just tell the first group of slaves what to do and then expect them to pass the word to the other groups? ** no, Jacob gave these orders to each group separately

--- We aren't told but why might he have spoken to each group separately? ** to make sure there were no mistakes!

*-- Gen. 32:20 Then after saying that the herds are a gift to Esau from Jacob, what other fact is each group of slaves to give? ** that his servant Jacob is coming behind them

--- What is Jacob's idea behind all of this? ** to soften up Esau by giving him very large gifts in stages, then maybe if Esau was still mad, this would soften his anger and he would accept his brother. Also he'd see that Jacob wasn't coming back in a lordly manner to claim his inheritance, but is humble and conciliatory.

=== So Esau will know Jacob's attitude as Jacob returns home, and hopefully he will be more friendly toward his twin.

*-- Gen. 32:21-23 Did Jacob and his family travel with the gifts to Esau? ** no, the gifts went ahead of them and Jacob then set up camp where they were

--- What did Jacob do during the night? ** got up and sent his family over the brook Jabbok with all of his belongings

--- By the way, how many wives does this say Jacob has? ** 2

--- But what about Bilhah and Zilpah? ** they are just called maidservants

--- And how many children does it mention here? ** 11 sons

--- But how many had been mentioned back in chapter 30? ** 12

--- So how is it now just 11? ** evidently this isn't counting the daughter, Dinah, just the 11 sons

--- Now what does it call the Jabbok here? ** a ford

--- What is a ford? ** a place where a river can be crossed

=== The Jabbok is a river that starts only about 10 miles from the Jordan, but it twists and turns for about 60 miles before reaching the Jordan River. It is fairly shallow and is easily forded at many places. From the one picture I saw, it is in sort of like a canyon with sort of small softly rolling hills on either side.

--- Did Jacob go with his family? ** no

*-- Gen: 32:24 Now we come to something I don't understand.

--- Where is Jacob in relation to his family? ** it sounds as if he is on the far (northern) side of the river Jabbok by himself, with his wives and children on the southern bank, nearer Esau

=== I'm not sure why Jacob would have put them in this position. If he's trying to put his wives and children in the strongest position possible, you would think that he would have had them on the north or far side of the river. As it is, if Esau had come upon them now, he would have reached the wives and children first, then had to cross the river to reach Jacob. Did Jacob perhaps hope to turn Esau's wrath by showing, "See, I'm here in peace, here are my women and children"? After all, warring parties don't travel with women and children. Or was he trying to protect himself? But I just can't see his protecting himself at the risk of Rachel and Joseph. But we aren't told. We do know later, however, that before Esau comes, Jacob crosses back over the river and puts himself in front of his wives and children. But let's go on with what we do know here. Also, perhaps Jacob was going to cross over himself as soon as he was sure that everything and everyone else was across. Or maybe he just planned on being a rear guard and sleeping there alone. We aren't given any details.

--- So who is with Jacob at this point? ** he's alone

--- Was Jacob able to have a good night's sleep? ** no

--- Why not? ** someone came and wrestled with him until morning

=== We aren't told whether the person came right away or much later in the night.

--- We aren't told, but just thinking about it, who do you suppose attacked first? ** again, it doesn't say, but I would count on Jacob

=== Here he is either getting ready to cross the river himself or getting ready to go to sleep or settling down for the night (we don't know which), and some stranger comes up. The natural thing for Jacob to have done was to ask "Who's there?" When the stranger doesn't tell him, the way a man would respond would be to fight. But we aren't really told any details, just that a man was with him and they wrestled until dawn.

--- By the way, why did they wrestle; why didn't they box instead? ** it was dark, so they couldn't see each other!

*-- Gen. 32:25 This verse is full of pronouns. The NIV solves this by supplying the words instead of pronouns, but let's sort it out from the NAS and KJ ourselves.

--- Who saw he wasn't winning over whom? ** The "Man" wasn't winning against Jacob

--- What did the "man" do about it? ** fouled Jacob by dislocating his thigh

--- Would this dislocated thigh make it harder for Jacob to wrestle? ** of course!

=== Let's stop and think a minute. We know from farther on that this "man" is actually the Lord.

--- How could a mere human like Jacob possibly be winning again God? ** have you ever seen a man wrestle with his, say, 4 year old son, and the son "wins"?!

*-- Gen. 32:26 OK, Jacob's wrestled all night, and now has a dislocated hip, how old is he at this point? ** about 97!

--- But Who asked to be let go? ** The "man"

--- What reason does the "man" give? ** it's day

=== I don't know what that would have had to do with it if it had just been 2 men there wrestling!

--- How sporting was Jacob when his opponent "taps out"? ** he wouldn't let him go

=== Let's look at it though. Jacob had been alone; a stranger approaches and they fight; Jacob is winning and the man fouls Jacob, injuring him; then the man wants to be let go. You can see why the winner of a weird match like this might think, "Let you go, why should I?"

--- Under what conditions does Jacob say he'll let his opponent go? ** if the stranger will bless him

--- Now, we aren't told, but why might Jacob have asked this stranger to bless him before he'd let him go? ** my own opinion is that Jacob didn't yet know that this was the Lord he had been wrestling with, but that he figured that if this stranger would bless him, then he wouldn't try to harm Jacob when Jacob let go of him, not try to sucker punch him or the like; sort of like saying "uncle" or shaking hands after a match; they would part at least not as enemies

=== But, again, we aren't told the reason.

*-- Gen. 32:27-28 What does the man ask before he blesses Jacob? ** Jacob's name

--- What does the man do after asking Jacob his name? ** changes it

--- To what? ** Israel

--- Do any of you have a footnote as to what that means? ** my KJ says "prince of God", however it seems to mean more "he who has power with God" or "he who prevails with God", which might mean sort of the same thing

--- Why was Jacob's name changed to Israel? ** because he said that Jacob had used power against God and man and won, prevailed

--- Can you think of any particular man against whom Jacob had prevailed recently? ** Laban

--- Of course, why had Jacob "prevailed" against Laban? ** because the Lord had interfered!

--- Who does God say won in the wrestling match and in the potential struggle with Laban? ** Jacob

=== People sometimes try to say that Jacob couldn't have won against God, but it says here that he did. But, again, God would have to have let him do so! But Jacob did win.

*-- Gen. 32:29 Does Jacob tell the man to stop talking and just bless him? ** no

--- What does Jacob do after having his name changed? ** asks the stranger's name

--- Does he demand to know or ask politely? ** politely, "please"

--- What does the man say his name is? ** he doesn't

--- What does the stranger do though? ** blesses Jacob

--- What was the blessing? ** we aren't told

*-- Gen. 32:30 What did Jacob name the place where he wrestled? ** Peniel

--- Do you have a footnote that tells what Peniel means? ** "The Face of God"

--- So Who did Jacob now know he had been wrestling all night with? ** God

=== We don't know when he first suspected with whom he was wrestling, but he certainly knows at this point.

--- What is his reaction to having seen God? ** "I saw Him, but I didn't die!"

*-- Gen. 32:31-32 What did Jacob do now that it was morning? ** went over Penuel

=== Penuel and Peniel are the same; both mean "the face of God".

--- Was Jacob's hip all right now that the fight was over? ** no, he limped
--- Does it say how long this hip bothered Jacob? ** no
--- How do the Jews remember this wrestling match? ** by not eating the meat at that point on an animal
--- At first it said that the hip was out of joint, but what does it say here? ** that the muscle shrank
--- That's all we're told, but do you have any thoughts on this? ** I don't know, but maybe Jacob's muscle shrank at that point over a period of time because his hip was out of joint and he wasn't able to get it fixed; but that's just a thought
--- But does it seem that Jacob didn't get over this injury? ** it does to me, though it isn't definite

REVIEW:

-- So how can we divide Chap. 32 and tell what it's about in a sentence or two? ** the preparation to meet Esau and wrestling with an angel or the Lord Himself
-- In what 2 ways did Jacob prepare to meet Esau? ** (1) sent large herds of goats, sheep, camels, cows, and donkeys as presents, each by itself, ahead of himself, his family, and the rest of his herds to soften up Esau, and (2) divided his family and the remaining herds into 2 groups so one could escape while the other was being attacked, it that were to happen
-- What happened that night as he's awaiting his brother? ** Jacob wrestles with God
-- What 2 things are the outcome of that wrestling match? ** (1) Jacob gets a new name, and (2) he gets a limp

APPLICATIONS:

** Prepare for unforeseen bad events.
** Try to make peace with you enemies.
** Make peace with those you've offended, whether intentionally or unintentionally.
** Pray when you are in trouble.
** It's all right to remind God of His promises.
** God is very kind to His children (He let Jacob "win").
** The Lord is with us even when we can't see Him.
** We should pray but also take action, not just sit back.

Chapter 33: The Meeting with Esau

=== So Jacob is in Gilead. He has sent out presents for his brother to meet as brother Esau comes galloping up to meet him with an army. From what I can figure, he then took his family across a ford of the brook Jabbok to the southern side, the side nearest Esau. Then he himself crossed back over the brook to spend the night by himself on the farm side. I don't know why he did it that way, but I'm sure he had a reason.

-- But then what had Jacob done that night, Gen. 32:24-32? ** wrestled all night with the Lord

-- Who won? ** Jacob!

-- What did Jacob get during all of this wrestling? ** a new name, a blessing, and a lame hip

=== Now he has joined his family again.

-- From what you can figure, how is Jacob situated now in regard to the Jabbok River? ** he seems to have his back to it.

-- If he were planning on showing his brother that he was ready to fight, would he have chosen such a position? ** no, he would have been on the other side of the river so that Esau would have had to cross it to attack him.

=== So, the 5 rich presents of herds were to show Esau that Jacob was coming peaceably. Now just the very fact that Jacob has his and his family's backs to the river puts him in a very vulnerable position and shows indisputably that Jacob is coming in peace. He's placing himself completely at the mercy of Esau. He's not going to be fighting for any "rights."

*-- Gen. 33:1-2 What does Jacob see? ** his brother Esau coming with his army of 400 men

--- So what further precautions does Jacob now take, v. 1? ** he divides up his family

--- Into how many groups does he divide them? ** 3

--- Who does Jacob put in the first group, the group that Esau will meet first? ** the concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah, evidently together, along with their children

--- How many children would that be? ** 4 sons

=== So the concubines and their sons would be the ones Jacob would most easily give up! The concubines were slaves and probably expected that, but imagine how the sons may have felt! "We don't matter much to Daddy!" But, again, as sons of concubines, they might have realized that this would just be the way things would be.

--- Who is in the middle group? ** Leah and her children

--- How many children would that have in it? ** 7, 6 sons and one daughter

--- And who was in the last group that Esau would meet? ** Rachel and her one child, Joseph

=== Put yourself in the place of Leah. How would that make Leah feel?! Jacob obviously valued Rachel and her 1 son more that Leah with all 6 of her sons! And Leah was the first wife, too! You can also imagine the feelings of Leah's sons! They might well have felt they should have been the most valuable, being the first 4 sons in order of birth. Joseph was only the 11th son of Jacob! Also, there were 6 of them as opposed to just the 1 son Joseph. You can almost feel jealousies and troubles brewing! Jacob may have been good at psychology in dealing with his brother, but it seems to me that he was pretty deficient in psychology when dealing with his wives and children! But to get back to the story here.

*-- Gen. 33:3 So the wives and children are spread out into 3 groups, but now what does Jacob do? ** he goes out in front of the rest of the family

=== Let's get the picture here.

--- What was the first thing that Esau was going to meet along the way as he comes charging out to meet his twin brother? ** those spread out herds of animals

=== Then as Esau gets past the animals and is told they are gifts from his "slave Jacob," he comes to the people.

--- What is Esau going to see first as he gets there with his army? ** his brother Jacob by himself

--- And what will be scattered out behind Jacob? ** 3 groups of women and children

--- And what does Jacob do when Esau gets there? ** he approaches Esau, bowing himself to the ground 7 times as he approaches until he's near Esau

=== And these weren't just our "bow-from-the-waist" type of bows. These were the kind where you get down on both knees and touch your forehead to the ground -- what we would call kow-towing.

=== Now, remember, at this point in time Jacob was in his 90s and had been worrying about this reception, and he'd just gotten through wrestling all night, so he's probably very tired,

--- And to top it all off, what was his physical condition as of that night? ** he has a dislocated hip!

=== To bow to the ground once would be hard enough with a dislocated hip, but 7 times!! So Esau would see his brother coming limping toward him and getting down onto the ground and then getting back up 7 times. We aren't told, but I would imagine that Jacob had something of a struggle getting up and down those 7 times, and Esau would have seen all of this. Esau would see that Jacob was no proud man returning in triumph to take over everything and coming striding out confidently to hopefully shake hands with Esau! He was crippled and was very humble in his actions.

--- And does Jacob know yet at this point how Esau will receive him? ** no

=== I can't think of a more humble and placating way that Jacob could have done this. He could have done things in a way that would have been safer for him, but this way Jacob is completely throwing himself on his brother's mercy.

*-- Gen. 33:4 How does Esau receive Jacob? ** very warmly; he runs to meet Jacob and hugs and kisses him and weeps

--- And how does Jacob respond to this reception? ** he weeps, too

=== You can imagine Jacob's relief! He could well have been worrying in the back of his mind about this for 20 years! And right up until that moment he could have wondered if Esau would just ride up and slaughter him and then capture the women and children or kill them as well. Of course, if Esau did this, he would have to face his father Isaac! Though I guess Esau could have made up some sort of story, and Esau would then have been the sole heir of Isaac. But that isn't what he did. Instead, he greeted his twin brother warmly. Remember, God had plans for Jacob!

=== This is sheer speculation, which can be dangerous, but I can't help but wonder what Esau was thinking during all of this. Had he been missing his twin? coming back to cause trouble for him? Was Esau thinking he'd have to have a showdown? Had Esau brought this army with him as a sign of respect? Or as a show of his own potential power? Had the Lord spoken to Esau as He had to Laban as Laban had chased Jacob down with an army? We aren't told any of this. All we know is that Esau gave every sign of being glad to see his brother Jacob. I think we ought to give Esau the benefit of the doubt!

*-- Gen. 33:5 After greeting his brother with great shows of affection, what does Esau see? ** the women and children

--- And what does Esau do as he sees them? ** he asks who all those were who were with Jacob

--- What does Jacob say they are? ** his children

--- And how does he say he got them? ** God had graciously given them to him

=== Remember, Jacob had been a bachelor when Esau had last seen him, though he knew that Jacob was being sent north for a wife. We don't know just what, if any, communication there had been between them or between Isaac and Jacob up until now. Remember, there was no regular postal service then! But my guess is that there had been at least some communication in that Jacob knew where to send messengers to Esau. Remember also that years before, Abraham had heard that his brother Nahor had grandchildren. So there must have been some sort of communication going on between Syria and Canaan. But there are a lot of details left out here.

--- And, again, what does Jacob call himself? ** Esau's servant or slave

=== This was probably the respectful way of addressing Esau, but it was also the wise way!

*-- Gen. 33:6-7 What is the order of introduction of the wives and children? ** the same as the groups they were in. First Bilhah and Zilpah and their 4 sons together. Next Leah and her 6 sons and 1 daughter. And then lastly Rachel and Joseph

--- How many of the children does it name by name here? ** just Joseph

--- Interestingly, how are Rachel and her son listed, in what order? ** first "Joseph", then "Rachel"

=== I don't draw any conclusions from that, but I thought it was interesting. Of course, Esau would be more interested in a nephew than in a sister-in-law, and a son was what counted.

--- And how did the wives and children greet Esau? ** they also prostrated themselves before him

=== We don't think of prostrating ourselves before anyone, but this was the way things were done then. It was the polite thing to do. Also that was a way of saying that they were inferior to Esau.

*-- Gen. 33:8-9 After meeting Jacob's family, what does Esau ask? ** what was the meaning of the herds he'd met on the way

--- And what is Jacob's answer? ** that they were a gift to please Esau, to make Esau look favorably on him

--- What gracious reply does Esau give to that? ** "Oh, no, I have enough; you keep them yourself"

--- What did Esau call Jacob? ** "my brother"

*-- Gen. 33:10 Does Jacob go ahead and take the herds back? ** no, he insists that Esau take them

=== Then Jacob gives 2 reasons for Esau to take them.

--- What is the first reason? ** it would show that Jacob had found favor in Esau's sight

--- And the second reason? ** he is just so glad to see him that he just wants to give them to Esau

--- To what does Jacob compare seeing Esau? ** he says he sees Esau's face as he would see the face of God

=== I don't quite understand this comparison. He's not saying Esau is God, of course, but I guess perhaps it means that he's just so happy to see Esau.

*-- Gen. 33:11 Then what does Jacob ask Esau to do? ** to please take the gift he sent to him

--- And what further reason does Jacob again give for Esau to accept it? ** that he had plenty because God had been so good to him

--- So who finally ends up with the groups of herds? ** Esau

=== I don't know if that were the polite way to give a present: giver gives it, receiver demurs, giver insists, "well, all right". Remember when Abraham bought the Cave of Macpelah? They went through this same routine.

--- But other than politeness, why do you think Jacob kept urging Esau to take the 550 animals? ** if Esau took the gift, it would be a sign that he was no longer angry with Jacob; his continued refusal might be construed as a sign that Esau was actually unfriendly in his attitude toward Jacob

=== Sort of like if a person offered someone a cup of coffee, and the second person refused to drink with him, saying "I won't drink with you." If Esau accepts the gift, he is saying that he is now friends with Jacob, and to act in an unfriendly manner later would be dishonorable. I read in my Bible customs book that this giving of presents was common and almost any transaction or formal visit involved the giving of presents. If a person refused, then that showed they were your enemy.

--- Was there anyone besides Jacob's family and slaves to witness this polite exchange? ** yes, Esau's army of 400

=== We aren't told, but this must have included many of Esau's own sons and grandsons and in-laws. Treachery wasn't considered a virtue, so Esau is really bound by his show of friendliness. I can't help but hope it was sincere! But, again, we aren't told what Esau was feeling inside.

*-- Gen. 33:12-14 What does Esau propose next? ** that Jacob break camp and the 2 of them travel together.

--- Is that agreeable to Jacob? ** no

--- What does Jacob call Esau? ** my lord

--- What excuse does Jacob give? ** that the children are young and weak, and the flocks have nursing babies, so if he were to travel too hard, it could kill the flocks

--- How old would the children have been? ** it seems to have been right soon after Joseph was born that Jacob started working for the herds, so Joseph would be about 6 years old; then Jacob had married the sisters 13 years before they left, so Reuben couldn't have been more than about 12 years old, it seems to me

--- What does Jacob suggest instead of their traveling together? ** that Esau go ahead of him and go back home, and then Jacob will follow him slowly as the children and herds can take it

--- Where does Jacob say he will go? ** to Esau in Seir

*-- Gen. 33:15 What does Esau offer next? ** to leave some of his men to help Jacob

--- Did Jacob take him up on this? ** no

--- Why not? ** he doesn't seem to think that he needed any more help

--- Again, was Jacob alone there as the only man with all of these herds? ** no, he had lots of slaves

=== I don't know how much of this was true generosity on Esau's part or if this were just the polite way of dealing with each other. The expected thing to say, so to speak.

*-- Gen. 33:16-17 So where does Esau go? ** south, home to Seir

=== This was about 90 miles south of the Jabbok where Jacob was at the moment, just south of the Dead Sea. And Seir was also about 45 miles south-east of where their father Isaac was living. Though a lot of Seir is wild land, it has valleys of fertile soil where trees and grass grow very well. Seir was also called the land of Edom.

--- Why was it called "Edom"? ** because that was Esau's other name, and this was Esau's land

=== So Esau went back home to the land of Seir.

--- And where does Jacob go? ** to Succoth

=== Succoth is west toward the Jordan River.

--- And what direction had we said that Esau lived? ** south

--- So does that sound to you as if Jacob were really planning on going down to the land of Seir and being with Esau? ** no!

=== But both men have saved face, haven't they? We don't know what Esau had planned on doing in the first place, but it turns out that they met peaceably and parted peaceably, Esau with a large gift and Jacob having been very humble and conciliatory.

--- How long does it seem that the twin brothers visited with each other? ** it seems just to have been for a while that day, though the Bible often leaves out details, so it could have been longer; we aren't told

--- Where had we said that Jacob went? ** to Succoth

--- What did he do there? ** built some sort of house for himself and shelters for his herds

--- Do you have a footnote that says what Succoth means? ** booths

--- Does Succoth seem to have been named that before Jacob got there? ** no, it seems to have been afterward

--- Why? ** because Jacob built booths there for the cattle

=== This doesn't have anything to do with the holiday, Succoth, that the Jews have today. That holiday came from events that were to happen about 250 years after this incident with Jacob, when the Jewish nation camped out (lived in booths) in the Sinai wilderness during their 40 years of wandering under Moses.

--- So again, does it seem that Jacob had really planned on going down and visiting with Esau? ** no

=== It may just have been politeness on both of their parts. And considering all that had happened before, it was probably wiser that they not be to close to each other.

--- Also, was there anyone else that Jacob might want to visit? ** yes, his father Isaac over in Hebron

*-- Gen. 33:18 To what land did Jacob go next? ** the land of Canaan

--- Where in Canaan? ** Shechem

--- So what direction had Jacob continued in? ** west

=== He'd have to have crossed the Jordan to get into the land of Canaan, wouldn't he?

=== The KJ seems to say that he went to a place named Shalem which was a city of Shechem. However, the NAS and NIV say that he came "safely" to Shechem. "Shalem" means "peace." We'll just let it go and say that he got to the city of Shechem.

=== So when he left Esau, Jacob headed westward and went across the Jordan River to the land of Shechem perhaps to a city called Shalem there in the land of Canaan. At any rate, he's now in Canaan.

--- What did he do there? ** pitched his tent

--- Where, in the city? ** no, outside the city

*-- Gen. 33:19 What did Jacob do then? ** bought a piece of land there

--- Specifically, which land was this? ** the land where he had his tent pitched

--- Did he probably have more than one tent? ** yes

--- What makes you say that? ** to start with, he had 4 wives! As well as 11 children! And of course, he had many slaves

=== So I doubt if he only bought a plot about the size of a city lot. But we're given no details.

--- How much did he pay for the land? ** 100 pieces of money

--- From whom did he buy it? ** the children of Hamor

--- What was the name of one of Hamor's children? ** Shechem

=== We'll be hearing more about Shechem in the next chapter.

=== From this, we might infer that Shechem owned a lot of land, and "Shechem" became the name of an area just at "Edom", Esau's other name, became the name of an area. Of course, the man Shechem and the land could both have been named after one of his grandfathers. We're given no details.

--- Does it sound as if Jacob were planning on staying there a while or does it sound as if he were

just traveling through? ** from the fact that he bought the land, to me it sounds as if he were planning to settle there a while
=== I can't help but wonder why he didn't go right away and see his aging father. We aren't told, though.
*-- Gen. 33:20 What did Jacob do on this land he bought besides pitch his tent there? ** he put up an altar
--- What did he name it? ** EleloheIsrael
--- Do you have a footnote that says what this means? ** "God, the God of Israel"
--- So whose God is Jacob saying that God is? ** his own, Israel's
=== So it sounds as if he had accepted this new name of Israel that God had given him when they wrestled.
--- Whose God had Jacob called God before this, 32:9? ** the God of Abraham and Isaac
=== So now he's saying that the Lord is his own God as well.
=== Incidently, this land that he bought is where his son Joseph would be buried about 300 years later after the children of Israel brought Joseph's body up out of Egypt and carried it with them in the wilderness for 40 years under Moses and then went into and conquered the Promised Land of Canaan under Joshua.

REVIEW:

-- What, in a sentence is this chapter about? ** Jacob meets Esau then parts from him peaceably
-- Did Jacob then take his family down to stay with Esau? ** no
-- Where did he go? ** across the Jordan into Canaan to Shechem

APPLICATION:

** Approach someone you've offended humbly and really seeking peace.
** Don't impose yourself on someone you've offended (Jacob didn't go down and stay with Esau).
** Accept forgiveness.
** Make the Lord your own God!
** Always use good manners.
** Be at peace with all men.
** Don't be bitter about past wrongs.

Chapter 34: The Tragedy of Dinah

===	Jacob has peaceably met Esau. Instead of following Esau down into Edom as Jacob had said he would, instead Jacob went west and finally settled in Shechem, across the Jordan River, where he bought a field on which to pitch his tent.
--	What else did he put up there in the field he bought, 33:20? ** an altar
*--	Gen. 34:1 Who now enters the picture? ** Dinah
---	And who is Dinah? ** the daughter of Leah and Jacob
---	Who are her whole brothers (29:32-35; 30:18-20)? ** Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah Issachar, and Zebulun
---	What did Dinah do? ** went out to get acquainted with the neighbor girls
*--	Gen. 34:2 Who saw Dinah as she's visiting the neighbor girls? ** Shechem
---	Can we make any sort of guess of about what age was Dinah? ** we aren't told, but my guess would be somewhere between 9 and 13
===	She may have matured early, but she was at least old enough to be attractive to a man, but she isn't yet married. Also, we aren't told how long Jacob and his family had been living in Shechem. It could have been several years.
---	What was Shechem's position in the city? ** his father was the prince of the land
---	Where have we heard of his father before, 33:19? ** he was the one from whom Jacob bought the piece of land outside the city
---	What did Shechem do when he saw Dinah? ** he raped her
---	What was the result of this raping? ** the KJ says she was defiled, but actually the word means to humble or make low
===	This is the same word that is used when Sarah "dealt hardly" with the pregnant Hagar when Hagar was being disrespectful. Sarah humbled Hagar, make her low.
===	By the way, we aren't told specifically here whether he seduced her or forcibly raped her. There is a difference, but both are very wrong.
---	Do you think Dinah was a plain girl or pretty? ** probably very pretty
---	Why would you say that? ** to start with, Shechem really took to her, but look at her Aunt Rachel, her aunt/grandmother Rebekah, even her great-aunt\great-grandmother Sarah. Also, later we're told that her ½ brother Joseph was good looking.
*--	Gen. 34:3-4 How did Shechem feel after having defiled Dinah, v. 3? ** he loved her and spoke lovingly to her
---	What did Shechem want to do about this? ** he wanted to marry her
---	How did he go about trying to marry her? ** he asked his father to see about it
===	That was the custom. The father would arrange the marriage.
*--	Gen. 34:5 Who heard about this defiling of Dinah? ** her father Jacob
---	Are we told how he came to hear of it? ** no
===	From later in the story it would seem that Dinah was still in the city of Shechem, so I don't think Dinah came and told her father, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about that.
---	It says that Jacob heard about the incident. We aren't told how he heard about it, but what are a couple of ways in which he might have heard other than from Dinah herself? ** (1) I've wondered if Dinah were actually allowed to wander around by herself or if she had a nanny-nurse-duenna who went places with her who might have gone back and told Jacob, or (2) Jacob could have "heard" when Hamor comes to him in the next verse and asks for Dinah's hand in marriage for his son
---	Where were Dinah's 11 brothers at this time? ** out in the fields

--- What were they doing there? ** evidently helping take care of the animals

=== So again, it would seem to me that several years may have passed since they left Laban.

--- Had the brothers yet heard about what had happened to their sister? ** no

--- What, at this point, did Jacob do about the situation? ** nothing

*-- Gen. 34:6 Did Shechem's father go along with what his son wanted, to marry the daughter of this Hebrew? ** yes

--- What did he do? ** he went to Jacob and talked to him about it

=== Now, I'm going to speculate for a minute here. I think that this is the place where to me it sounds more as if Shechem had seduced Dinah. He was, we find out later in the chapter, an important man in the city. Here he is smitten by this little girl-woman, which is pretty flattering. If they had liked each other, and he had seen a lot of her as, say, she had been visiting his sisters, a seduction could have taken place with somewhat of her consent. In which case I can see his coming and asking her father to marry her. Many marriages in our own "civilization" for centuries have taken place after "going too far" or even outright seduction. However, if he had actually forcibly raped her, I can't see why he would expect that (1) she would even want to marry him or (2) why her father wouldn't just shoot him if he came near him. Unless, of course, rape were just an accepted way of life there! Or, of course, it could now be figured that since she was no longer a virgin that no one else would want to marry her. But I wouldn't be surprised if there were a mutual attraction between Shechem and Dinah (though she was probably just barely out of childhood of that time and he could have been any age), especially now that they had been so intimate she might really want to marry him. But we are told no details in the Bible; we aren't at all told what Dinah thought. This is all speculation on my part.

--- Again, what about Dinah's brothers; what did they think when Hamor first came? ** they weren't there and didn't know about it; they were out working with the herds in the fields.

--- And, referring again back to v. 5, did Jacob just go ahead and act on this situation immediately? ** no, he waited for his sons to come in out of the field

*-- Gen. 34:7 From this verse, did Jacob just wait until his sons finally came home from work? ** no, it sounds as if a messenger were sent to them out in the fields

--- By the way, what word is used to designate the brothers here? ** "men"

=== Again, the fact that Jacob waited to deal with the situation until his sons came in makes me wonder if perhaps this isn't a few years after Jacob came into the land. (1) If Dinah were 6, I can't see her having been seduced or ready for marriage, and (2) if the brothers were 6 - 13, I can't see their being called "men" nor Jacob's waiting for them before doing anything. Though I may be mistaken about the importance then of the consent of brothers. But usually a 10 year old boy isn't referred to as a man. And if this had happened immediately after Jacob's return, as one might gather from the way the chapters are, then the oldest of Dinah's brothers, Reuben, could have been would be 13 and the others younger. So I have the feeling that at least a few years may have elapsed. We aren't told.

--- Where have we heard before about a brother's having had something to say about the marriage of his sister? ** remember with Laban when Abraham's servant came and asked for Rebekah

=== We weren't told Laban's age then, either, were we? But to get back to the story here.

--- What is the reaction of the brothers? ** they are deeply unhappy and very angry

--- We don't know how the Canaanites looked on seduction and/or rape, but how did Jacob's brothers consider it? ** to be a crime, something that shouldn't be done

--- What does the KJ "folly in Israel" mean? ** a crime against Jacob and his family

--- Why "Israel"? ** because that's Jacob's other name

*-- Gen. 34:8 Who is talking to whom? ** Hamor, Shechem's father, is talking to Jacob and his sons

--- How does he refer to Dinah? ** as "your daughter"

=== Now here is where the KJ is superior to other translation.

--- Is Hamor saying "your daughter" just to Jacob or to her brothers as well; in other words, according to the KJ, is "your" singular or plural? ** it's plural, so it's calling Dinah the daughter of her father and brothers

=== I think it may just mean "close female relative" in this case.

--- What would the pronoun have been in the KJ if Hamor had just been talking to Jacob, the father? ** "thy"

--- So what does Hamor ask them to do? ** to let Shechem marry Dinah

*-- Gen.34:9-10 Then what does Hamor propose that both his family and Jacob's family do, v. 9? ** intermarry with each other

--- If they did this, what good would that bring to Jacob and his family v. 10? ** they could settle down and live wherever they wanted in that land and trade freely and get even richer

--- Does this all sound like an honorable proposal to you? ** it does to me (providing we ignore the original treatment of Dinah!)

*-- Gen. 34:11-12 Was Hamor by himself as he talked to Jacob? ** no, Shechem was with his father

--- How much was Shechem willing to do in order to marry Dinah? ** anything they say

--- How much bride-price was he willing to give them? ** he puts no limit on the dowry

--- Would you say that Shechem is acting honorably at this point? ** I would

*-- Gen. 34:13 Who answers Shechem and his father? ** Dinah's brothers

-- Are we told which brothers? ** no

=== My guess is that Dinah's full brothers would have had more say in this.

--- What kind of answer do Dinah's brothers get ready to give? ** a deceitful one

--- Why? ** because Shechem had done that terrible thing to Dinah

--- Notice that in this instance the brothers are answering, not the father; have we heard of such a thing before? ** yes, when Laban seemed to do the deciding about whether his sister Rebekah would go and marry Isaac

=== Again, I wonder if that were the custom in those days.

*-- Gen. 34:14 What do Dinah's brothers say they can't do? ** let their sister marry anyone who is not circumcised

--- Why not? ** they said it would disgrace them

--- Where had they gotten the custom of circumcision? ** from their father Jacob who got it from his father Isaac who got it from his father Abraham who got it from God

--- When did Abraham get this order from God? ** the year before Isaac was born

=== We can remember this, because Ishmael was circumcised when he was 13, just as the Mohamedans are, who are descendants of Ishmael.

--- What do they call Dinah here? ** their sister

*-- Gen. 34:15-17 Under what condition do the brothers say they will let Dinah marry Shechem? ** if all of the males are circumcised

=== It's unclear here whether it's the immediate family or the whole city. but we'll see more about this later.

--- If Shechem's males agree to that condition, what else do the brothers say they will do? ** intermarry with them, becoming one family with them

--- Referring back to v. 13, were they sincere in what they were saying? ** no

--- By the way, do we hear anything about Dinah's being there during this "bargaining"? ** no

=== From what we hear later about Dinah, she may still have been at Shechem's house.

--- What do the brothers say they'll do if this condition isn't agreeable to Shechem and his family? ** take Dinah and leave

=== I'm not sure if this means that they'd just take Dinah home or that they'd move away. Remember, Jacob had bought land there, and it sounds as if they might have been planning on staying a long time in the vicinity.

--- And what do they call Dinah here, v. 17? ** their daughter

*-- Gen. 34:18-19 Were Hamor and Shechem agreeable to these terms? ** yes, it says they were pleased

--- Why? ** because Shechem loved Dinah

=== I'd say he was agreeing to a lot! And speaking for a lot of people!

--- Where did Shechem stand in Hamor's family? ** he was evidently very high in position

=== The word means eighty or heavy. In this case it means he was more honorable.

=== I think Hamor and Shechem must have been pretty powerful to have been able to speak for all of the males in such a matter! I guess it was sort of like the king and crown prince.

=== Remember, Genesis 33:18 spoke of "a city of Shechem."

*-- Gen. 34:20-22 Where did Shechem and his father Hamor go after talking to Jacob and his sons? ** back home to their city to the city gate

=== Remember, business was often discussed at the city gate.

--- What did they do there? ** talked with the men of the city

--- So are they just talking with their immediate family? ** no

=== Of course, this could well have been a tribe, all of them related.

--- How did they describe Jacob and his family? ** as peaceable people, friendly

-- What does it mean, "the land is big enough for them?" ** that there was plenty of pasture land for their own herds as well as Jacob's herds.

--- What did they tell the men? ** about the agreement with Jacob to intermarry, trade, and live with each other but only on the condition that they were all circumcised.

*-- Gen. 34:23-24 What talking point did Shechem and Hamor use with the men of their city to get them to go along with this painful and untraditional surgery? ** "we can get all of their herds and goods if we intermarry and trade with them."

=== Remember, Jacob was a rich man! He had enough herds and goods to be impressive even after the princely gift that he had given to Esau.

--- What did the men of the city do about this proposal? ** agreed to it

--- Do you think they agreed only because it would help the popular Shechem get a pretty little wife? ** no, they all stood to gain, also Shechem had power and one pleases ones superiors!

=== Remember, this was surgery on a tender part of the body without anesthesia that they were agreeing to!

*-- Gen. 34:25-26 Did Dinah's brothers plan to keep their part of the bargain? ** no

--- So what did they do? ** they went in and killed all of the men of the city

--- When? ** on the third day after the surgery

--- Who specifically did this? ** Simeon and Levi

=== My guess is that they may have taken slaves with them, too, but we aren't told. Also, we aren't told how many men were in Shechem.

--- Were Simeon and Levi full brothers or half brothers of Dinah? ** full

--- Can we figure out at all what age group they would have been in? ** Well, Joseph is 17 when he's sold into slavery and this is before he's sold and may even be before Benjamin is born, and Simeon and Levi were born sometime in the 4 years before Joseph was. So Simeon and Levi were somewhere between 10 and 20.

=== But young men of 15-18 can make outstanding soldiers, don't forget.

--- What weapon did Simeon and Levi use? ** sword

--- How were 2 teenaged young men able to go into a city and kill all of the men? ** remember, this is just the 3rd day after they had all submitted to circumcision -- and they were sore and couldn't fight

=== Also, the KJ says they went boldly into the city, but it means that the city was unsuspecting and totally unprepared as well as their all being unable to move around.

--- How old had Simeon and Levi and all their brothers and their father Jacob been when they were circumcised? ** 8 days old

--- So how could they know that the men would all be so sore they couldn't fight, which probably was their plan all along? ** any slaves that they bought had to be circumcised, even if they were grown men; so they had to have seen this soreness happen before.

--- Who do we find still in Shechem's house? ** Dinah

--- What did Simeon and Levi do with Dinah? ** took her back home

=== I wish we were told more about Dinah and her feelings on all of this! But that is all we ever hear about poor little Dinah except just a mention of her as being with Jacob and his family as they go into Egypt several chapters later on. I presume from this that she never married.

*-- Gen. 34:27-29 Had Simeon and Levi killed everyone who lived in the city? ** no, just the men

--- What did at least Simeon and Levi (and maybe their brothers?) do after slaughtering all of the men in the city? ** they sacked the city, taking herds both in and out of the city, any other wealth, their children and wives for slaves, and anything else worth taking.

--- The King James says they "came upon the slain"; what does that mean? ** they even robbed the bodies of the men they'd killed.

--- What reason do they give for doing all of this? ** because of the crime done toward their sister

=== This Hebrew word for "defiled" is different that the word in v. 2. It actually means "defile, make unclean" rather than "humble or made low."

--- But how will it look to the rest of the people of that area if they come in and kill everyone and then completely sack the city? ** it'll look like they saw a good chance to "get rich quick" ad then took that chance!

=== It's interesting that the slaughter was done by only Simeon and Levi. But from v. 13 I wonder if more of them were in on the plan. But years later it seems that Jacob held just the two of them responsible (49:5-7). There is so much we aren't told!

--- Gen. 34:30-31 Had Jacob known of the plan of Simeon and Levi? ** no

--- What was his reaction to it? ** he didn't like it at all;

--- Jacob gives a description of what this slaughter did to Jacob; what was that? ** it would cause trouble for him, and it made him stink among the other people who lived in the land.

--- Was he really worried about his reputation, or was there more to it than that? ** he was afraid that all the different tribes in the area there might gang up on him and wipe him out.

--- From what we know, could that have happened, that Jacob and his whole family could be killed? ** no

--- Why not? ** because some of them had to remain so they could become a great nation

=== God keeps His promises. Also, we can't change God's plans, but I still think that Jacob had good cause for worry. God can implement His plans in ways we'd never think of!

--- Did Simeon and Levi take the blame? ** no, they passed the buck by saying it was Shechem's fault

--- How did they say Shechem had acted? ** he'd treated their sister like a prostitute.

=== This word means just that, a harlot, a wanton. It is often used of spiritual prostitution, as later when the Jews "played the harlot by going after other gods. It hardly ever means a person who is raped. Which makes it sound to me as if Dinah had been seduced rather than forcibly raped.

=== And let's just take one verse out of the next chapter:

*-- Gen. 35:1 Did Jacob go ahead and stay on the land that he'd bought from Shechem? ** no

--- Why not? ** God told him to move

REVIEW:

-- What tragic event is this chapter based around? ** the seduction/rape of Dinah

-- What does the man involved want afterwards? ** to marry little Dinah

-- Why? ** because he loved her

-- Who agreed? ** Jacob's sons

-- Who did what then? ** told them all to be circumcised and then Simeon and Levi went in and killed them all

-- Are we told if the others were in on the deception? ** no

-- What was Jacob's reaction? ** he didn't like it at all

APPLICATIONS:

** We should keep a close eye on our children (especially our daughters) and know where they are and whom they are with.

** We should leave vengeance up to the Lord.

** Treachery is not good and can get us in trouble.

** As parents, we should take care of things and not leave it up to hot-headed brothers!

** Deceit can run in the family.

** We shouldn't marry an unbeliever.

** Don't take short cuts; God can work out His plans.

Chapter 35: Rachel dies; Meeting with and death of Isaac

=== Jacob is now back in the land of Canaan.

-- Where had he been for the last 20 years? ** up in Haran in Syria with his uncle Laban

-- Why had he been there? ** to escape the wrath of his twin brother Esau after tricking him and getting the blessing

-- What was Jacob supposed to do there besides hide out in Haran? ** get a wife from his uncle

-- How many wives did Jacob end up with? ** 4

=== But then Jacob returned, met his brother Esau peaceably, and now he has been living in Shechem in the land of Canaan, perhaps for several years, though we aren't told. He has 4 wives, 11 sons and 1 daughter, and lots of slaves and herds.

-- What tragedy happened in Shechem? ** his daughter Dinah was violated

=== The man who did it, Shechem, evidently some sort of prince, then loved Dinah and wanted to marry her, asking her father and brothers for her. Then her brothers lied, agreeing under certain terms.

-- What were those terms? ** that all the men of Shechem were to be circumcised

-- But who did what after 3 days? ** Simeon and Levi went in and killed Shechem and the entire male population of his city and then took the women and children and looted the city

-- What would this make their revenge look like? ** just an excuse to get rich

=== Jacob hadn't known they would do this and wisely saw the probable consequences of his sons' treachery.

-- What did Jacob say might then happen? ** that all the various tribes there might gang up on them and wipe them out

== And so we continue.

*-- Gen. 35:1 Who then speaks to Jacob? ** God

--- Does is sound to you as if God were aware of the awkward situation that Jacob was now in? ** it does to me

=== Of course, God is always aware of everything!

--- What does God tell Jacob to do? ** leave there and go to Bethel to live

--- And what was Jacob to do there? ** make an altar to God

--- To what God? ** the God who had appeared to him when he was running away from Esau

--- And what had happened at Bethel over 20 years earlier? ** Jacob had had the vision with the ladder to heaven and God had promised to give Jacob numberless descendants, the land, and to be with Jacob and bring him back home again

--- Why might God have now pointed out that this was where He had appeared to Jacob before? ** God continually points out that He is the same God, not just some different little local god; He is God over everywhere

--- Again, what did God also point out that Jacob was doing at that time when he was in Bethel before? ** that he was fleeing from his brother Esau

=== Now this says that God told Jacob to "dwell" in Bethel, but the word doesn't have to mean to live somewhere for a long time. It can mean to sit or stay a while.

*-- Gen. 35:2-3 Who did Jacob talk to after God spoke to him? ** his family and slaves, his household

--- Where did he tell them that they were going? ** to Bethel

--- What did Jacob tell his family that they were going to do there? ** make an altar and sacrifice to God

--- How does Jacob describe God? ** as the one who had comforted him years ago and been with him all this time

--- What did Jacob tell his family and slaves to do first? ** get rid of any strange gods (and evidently also articles involved in paganism) and clean themselves and change clothes.

*-- Gen. 35:4 Did his household obey him? ** yes

--- What did they give Jacob? ** idols and earrings

=== These earrings may have been a sign of the worship of a particular idol or false god. Certain things are associated with certain ideas: a cross with Christianity, the star of David with Jews or Judaism, a hammer and sickle with communism, a moon and star with Islam, that sort of thing. Earrings were worn by both male and females of all ages and could have been like good luck charms or the like. Also they could have had pendants hanging from them with the idol's symbol on them.

=== I find it interesting that there were idols in the household in the first place, but probably the various slaves had their own household gods, etc.

--- We aren't told, but what may well have turned up at this time? ** the teraphim that Rachel had stolen from her father Laban when they had left Haran

--- When Laban had accused Jacob of stealing "his gods," what had Jacob said would happen to whoever had them, 31:32? ** that person wouldn't live

=== Again, we aren't told whether Laban's idols turned up at this time here in this chapter or not. Or whether Jacob had already found out about them. We just are told nothing about them at all. But let's leave that thought for now and go on.

--- What happened to these "religious" articles that the household gave to Jacob? ** Jacob hid them under an oak tree

=== The word means to hide by covering, so it sounds as if Jacob buried them there under the oak tree.

--- Where are they when this religious cleansing was taking place? ** still in Shechem

*-- Gen. 35:5 What had Jacob told his sons might happen to them because of Simeon and Levi's treachery (34:30)? ** the rest of the people of the land might gang up on them and wipe them out

--- But instead, what happened in the towns around them? ** there was a great terror on them

--- What was the result of this terror? ** the others left Jacob alone as he departed for Bethel, they didn't chase after him

--- The NAS leaves it out, but according to the KJ, where did this terror come from? ** from God

=== The Berkeley translation says, "A God-sent dread rested on surrounding towns", which I think expresses it very well. But I don't know if they were terrified of the God of Jacob or just of Jacob and his sons. At any rate, God took care of the problem of any revenge that the surrounding tribes might want to take on Jacob and his family.

*-- Gen. 35:6-7 Where did Jacob go? ** to Bethel

--- Did Jacob carry out God's orders? ** yes, to the letter

--- So what did Jacob build there? ** the altar that God had told him to build

--- What did Jacob name the place where he built the altar? ** Elbethel

--- Do you have a footnote that says was the means? ** the God of Bethel

--- And what does "Bethel" mean? ** house of God

== "El" means "God", so any word with "el" on it is referring to God: Bethel, Israel, Daniel, Samuel, etc. So Jacob called the name of the place "the God of the house of God."

--- Why would he give it that name? ** when Jacob first left his father's house for Laban's and had the dream about the ladder and the Lord, he had named the place Bethel, meaning "house of God". Now Jacob has returned, just as God had promised so many years before, and it is still the same God. So God is the same God as the God 20+ years before Who had appeared to Jacob then at Bethel.

=== I think this is just another indication that Jacob knew that God wasn't just some local god but was a powerful God over everything. Of course, his father and grandfather would have told him that, but he now has evidence of it himself.

--- By the way, it says he "came to Luz, that is Bethel;" why does it put it this way, why Luz (28:19)? ** because that had been the name of the place before Jacob had had the vision and had named it "house of God", Bethel

--- Gen. 35:8 What sad event happens now? ** Deborah dies

--- Who was Deborah? ** Rebekah's nurse

--- And where have we heard of her before? ** we didn't hear of her by name, but Rebekah's nurse had come with her when Abraham's servant brought Rebekah down to marry Isaac

=== I'm presuming this is the same nurse in both cases, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it.

--- If I am correct, at least how old might we figure Deborah was when she died? ** let's say that Deborah was at least 10 when she became Rebekah's nurse + let's say Rebekah was 13 when she was married + 20 years barren + Jacob about 77 when he left home to escape Esau's wrath + 20 yrs working for Laban = Deborah would be at least 140 years old when she died

--- Jacob seems to have left home at least 20 years earlier by himself; we aren't told, but how might it be that Deborah was now with him? (I can think of 2 possible ways; there might be more!) ** (1) Sometimes it seems that the Bible will tell a story and just mention the main character, as when Abraham's servant went to Haran for a wife for Isaac but we find out that he had others with him. Perhaps Jacob had servants and Deborah with him when he left home at about 77. Deborah might have wanted to see her old home again so had accompanied them or Rebekah might have wanted someone loyal to her to be with Jacob. (2) Very likely Deborah had also been at least the "charge nurse" to Jacob and Esau when they were small. Though we aren't specifically told, from what we can figure, Rebekah is now dead, and so then maybe Deborah had stayed with Rebekah until she died and then had gone to live with Esau and help with his children and he, in turn, would be taking care of his old, beloved nanny. Then when she heard that Jacob was coming, perhaps she wanted to see him for herself and had gone with Esau and his army to meet Jacob. Then she may have wanted to stay with Jacob and help with Jacob's wives and children and be taken care of herself by Jacob. (Remember, Deborah had been Rebekah's nurse; Jacob was Rebekah's favorite, so Jacob may have been Deborah's favorite also.)

=== But this is all supposition. All we really know is that Deborah was with Jacob and his family when she died.

=== And remember that the nannies and mammies were very beloved members of families. In the old South, the old mammies were greatly loved and all but regarded as members of the family. In England, where nannies raised the children, the nannies were more loved than the not-so-well-known mothers. My husband said that often during the wars when a young soldier would be wounded and dying, he'd call for his nanny rather than his mother.

--- So where was the dear old Deborah buried? ** under an oak tree near Bethel

--- What was the tree then called? ** Allon Bacuth

--- Do you have a footnote that says what this means? ** the oak of weeping

*-- Gen. 35:9-10 Who again now comes and talks to Jacob? ** God

--- When? ** after Jacob had left Padanaram

--- Where is Padan-aram? ** Haran, where Laban lived

=== Aram was a son of Shem.

--- Who was Shem? ** a son of Noah

--- And who of importance is descended from Shem? ** the "Shemites", Abraham and the Jews; also the Arabs

=== Anyway, Aram's descendants spread up into an area that came to be called Aram and which we now call Syria. So Aram is Syria. Padan-aram means a plain of Aram. Padan-aram was a large plain which was surrounded by mountains in the country of Aram. Then Haran was a town on this large plain. It might be compared with talking about Poway which is in the county of San Diego which is in the state of California. So, to boil it all down! God again appears to Jacob now that Jacob has left Syria and is back in the land of Canaan.

--- What did God do, v. 9? ** blessed Jacob

--- Of what did God again speak, v. 10? ** that Jacob's name was now Israel

--- Had Jacob ever heard that before? ** yes

--- When? ** after wrestling all night with the Lord at the Jabbok River just before Esau came

=== So this is nothing new here. It is just God reaffirming it. However, so far since the original renaming, Jacob hasn't been called Israel except when it said that Shechem's treatment of Dinah was "a folly in Israel." And that could be taken to mean the whole family. We'll think about this a little more in a minute.

=== Of course, here perhaps God is reminding Jacob that He's the same God Who had been at the Jabbok and wrestled with him there. Again, remember that local gods were what were common all over the world at that time. There would be a god of San Marcos and a different god of Vista, etc. But the Lord is the God of everywhere. Interestingly, this word for God (Eloheem) is in the plural!!

*-- Gen. 35:11-12 The Lord then identifies Himself; who does He say He is? ** God Almighty

=== You've heard the expression "El Shaddai." Well, that means "God Almighty." That's who God says He is here, El Shaddai. He has all of the might, all of the power everywhere, not just some power in certain places.

-- What command did God give? ** be fruitful and multiply

=== I'm not quite sure why God said this. Jacob already had 13 children! Perhaps God was referring to Jacob's sons' having lots of children.

--- What promises did God re-give to Jacob? ** (1) he would become a great nation, (2) kings would come from him (his descendants wouldn't just be all commoners), (3) the land will be given to him and his descendants

=== It says "a company of nations," also. I'm not sure why, but I think this may be a prophecy of the 12 tribes of Israel, but I'm not sure. But I'm not going to worry about it.

--- From what we know of the Bible, did kings actually come from Jacob? ** yes, lots of them

--- Name some? ** David, Solomon, and all of the other kings of both Judah and Israel

--- When and where had God given a similar promise to Jacob? ** over 20 years before at Bethel

=== God doesn't change, does He. And God keeps His promises.

*-- Gen. 35:13-15 God talked with Jacob and blessed him and then what did God do? ** left Jacob

--- What does Jacob do then? ** sets up a pillar of stone and pours a drink offering and oil on it

--- Had Jacob ever done this before? ** yes, again over 20 years earlier at the same place after God had given him the first promise

--- What had the first altar been made of before? ** his stone "pillow"

=== I wonder if the old altar were still there. But we aren't told. But this sounds like a separate pillar that he now sets up.

--- What did Jacob then, 20+ years earlier, call that place? ** Bethel

--- And, again, what does Bethel mean? ** house of God

=== Now, some might say that this is just referring back to when the Lord appeared to Jacob when he first left his parents to go to Haran. But in context it sounds like there are two times that the Lord appeared to Jacob here at the same place, gave him the same promises, and then Jacob erected a pillar each time, each time calling this the house of God. This happen as Jacob was leaving the land and as he was returning to it.

=== Just as a matter of interest, at this point it seems to me that Jacob has fulfilled his part of the bargain that he'd made with God 20+ years earlier. Let's briefly look at that.

*-- Gen. 28:20-22 Jacob makes a vow; what is the Lord's part of this vow, v. 20? ** if the Lord will be with him, give him traveling mercies, give him food and clothes

--- And if the Lord would do all of this how long, v. 21? ** until he can return peaceably to his father's house

--- Then what would that pillar be? ** the house of God

--- And if the Lord did that and Jacob got back, what would Jacob do, v. 22? ** give a tithe to God of everything he has

--- And what relationship would there be between them, v. 21? ** the Lord would be Jacob's God

=== It makes me wonder about Jacob's spiritual life before this! But we are given no details about this subject except that God as appeared to Jacob several times during that time, and Jacob has prayed to the Lord and built altars to Him. And in that the Lord calls Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I think we need to be careful of what we say about Jacob!

--- Okay, when Jacob had met Esau and crossed the Jordan, did Jacob immediately hurry down to Bethel to worship the Lord there? ** no

--- But on Jacob's return to the land of Canaan, had he immediately hurried down to see his old father? ** no

--- Instead, what had he done, 33:18-20? ** bought a piece of land outside of Shechem and settled down there

--- What finally got him back to Bethel? ** the rape of Dinah, the fear of the surrounding tribes, and then the order of the Lord

--- And what had Jacob done before traveling to Bethel, 35:2-4? ** gotten rid of all forms of idolatry among his possessions

=== So after all of this, Jacob finally gets back to Bethel, and here God again speaks to him and blesses him. So let's go on.

*-- Gen. 35:16 Did they settle down in Bethel? ** no

=== In v. 1 God had told Jacob to go to Bethel and live there. I don't know how long he was supposed to live there. Again, the word can also mean "to sit", and my feeling (and that's all it is, just my feeling) is that Jacob isn't being disobedient in leaving Bethel, but we aren't really told.

--- So, they leave Bethel and continue on their journey southward; they have gone about 20 miles, and what place to they get near? ** Ephrath

--- And what happens? ** Rachel goes into labor

--- Was it an easy labor? ** no, a difficult one

--- How many children had Rachel had before ? ** one

--- Who was that child? ** Joseph

*-- Gen. 35:17-18 Who helped Rachel during her labor? ** a midwife

--- What did the midwife tell her as her very difficult labor went on? ** "Don't be afraid; you're going to have another son

--- Did she? ** yes

--- With what tragic consequence? ** it killed her

=== Now-a-days she would have had a Caesarian.

--- Did she live long enough to see that she'd had a son? ** yes

--- What did she do before dying? ** named him

--- What did she name him? ** Benoni

--- Do you have a footnote that says what it means? ** son of my sorrow

--- What did Jacob, the bereaved husband, re-name the baby? ** Benjamin

--- And do you have a footnote that says what it means? ** son of the right hand

=== "Ben" means "son of".

=== Later on in the Bible it mentions a whole bunch of Benjamites who could use slings with their left hands. I don't know if that means the Benjamites were lefthanded as a rule or if they just trained themselves to be ambidextrous. But I find this ironic in view of the name that Jacob gave him.

*-- Gen. 35:19-20 Where was Rachel buried? ** Bethlehem

--- What was Bethlehem near? ** Ephrath

--- What did the grieving husband do? ** set up a pillar on her grave

--- Was the location of the place where Rachel was buried known for very long? ** yes, "unto this day"

=== About 700 years later I Samuel 10:2 mentions Saul as being near Rachel's tomb.

=== There is a place today that is known as Rachel's tomb. As I understand, it is about one mile north of Bethlehem. However, I don't know if it's the same place where she was actually buried or not.

--- Who do we know who later came from Bethlehem? ** Naomi, David, Jesus

=== Remember the prophecy in Mic. 5:2 where it says, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler of Israel..."? That is specifying this particular Bethlehem that is near Ephrath. Remember, the Bible isn't a bunch of isolated stories and places! It's all connected!

--- By the way, whose tribe does Bethlehem go to 250 years later? ** Judah

--- And who was Judah's mother? ** Leah

=== I find it sort of ironic that Rachel was buried in land that later went to one of Leah's sons! But Bethlehem is only a few miles south of the border of the land of the tribe of Benjamin.

=== Okay, so poor Rachel died. This makes me do some thinking. This is only speculation, but I can't help but wonder about it.

--- Again, what had Jacob said would happen to the person who had possession of Laban's idols, with whom they were found (31:32)? ** he would die

--- And who had stolen Laban's idols? ** Rachel

--- And did that person die, though not right away? ** yes

=== We aren't told this at all, but I can't help but wonder if Rachel's death were a fulfillment of this declaration of Jacob. But enough of that. Let's go on.

*-- Gen. 35:21-22 Jacob continues on his journey to a place that we can't locate; they are camped, and what does Jacob's oldest son do? ** lies with Bilhah

--- Who was Bilhah? ** Jacob's concubine

--- Whose handmaid had Bilhah been? ** the dead Rachel's

--- Had Bilhah had any children by Jacob? ** yes, 2 sons, Dan and Naphtali

--- What relation would they be to Reuben? ** his half brothers

=== So Reuben had sex with his brothers' mother, the wife of his father! In a sense she was sort of a semi-stepmother to him!

--- Did anyone hear about this semi-incestuous act? ** yes

--- Who? ** Israel

=== We have a problem here. Does this mean just Jacob heard about it, or does it mean the family, "Israel", heard about it. Back in 34:7, "Israel" seems to refer to the whole family. But at least we know that the father/husband heard about it.

=== If it were just Jacob who had heard, we aren't told if Reuben knew that his father knew. Also, as we just got through saying, we aren't specifically told if it were widely known or if it were entirely unknown except to Jacob. We just aren't told any details at all. But imagine what Jacob thought about it. Also, if Bilhah's sons Dan and Naphtali found out, imagine what they would have thought about it. But again, we don't know for sure if anyone besides Jacob knew. But it will come up again many years (and chapters!) later, and then everyone will know if they didn't already.

=== By the way, if this just means that Jacob heard about it, I don't know if there is actually any significance or not to the fact that it would then be calling him "Israel." But I do find it interesting. It goes on to call him "Jacob" in the very next sentence.

--- But where does Reuben rank in the order of birth of Jacob's 12 sons? ** he's the first born

=== So ordinarily he would become the next head of the family and would receive a double portion and special blessing simply because he was the firstborn. Later we'll find out that because of this dreadful sin, Reuben loses this special blessing of the firstborn and loses the double portion. So perhaps here Jacob is called Israel because he's being spoken of as the head of the family who can bestow blessings. I don't know, but it's something to think about. I checked through the rest of Genesis to see when he's called "Jacob" and when he's called "Israel," and I found it very interesting. As the name "Israel" comes up in Genesis, we'll make note of it just as a matter of interest, though I don't base any doctrines on it! But to go on with our story.

--- How many sons did Jacob have now? ** 12

*-- Gen. 35:23-26 So now it's going to give a list of Jacob's sons.

--- The sons are named in families according to their mothers; in what order is this? ** Leah, Rachel, Rachel's handmaid, Leah's handmaid

--- What is significant about this order? ** this order is the order in which Jacob married them.

=== Though often Zilpah, the handmaid of the first wife, is mentioned before the first handmaid Jacob married who was the handmaid of the second wife.

=== Later on when the tribes are named, they are named after 11 of the sons plus Joseph's 2 sons. Of these, only one, Benjamin, was born in the promised land of Canaan

*-- Gen. 35:27-29 Now we come to why Jacob was traveling in this southerly direction; what was it? ** that's where Isaac lived

=== Remember, when Isaac had given his blessing to Jacob well over 20 years earlier, he had given it at that time because he thought that he might die soon! Of course, we should always be ready to die and have our affairs in good order.

=== There is no mention of Rebekah here, and most people assume that she died while Jacob was gone, though we can't be dogmatic on this.

=== When Jacob had left over 20 years before, it says he left with only a staff in his hand. Now he comes back with 13 children, 3 wives, many slaves, and many herds.

--- Where was Isaac living? ** in Hebron

=== Mamre seems to have been a large plain, and Hebron was town on that plain.

--- Who does this say had lived there? ** Abraham and Isaac

=== Remember both Abraham and Isaac had off and on lived on the plain of Mamre or Hebron. That is where Abraham was living when the Lord and 2 angels came to him and promised him a son just before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Also, the cave of Machpelah where Abraham and Sarah were buried was there.

--- What eventually happens to Isaac, v. 29? ** he dies

--- How old did he live to be? ** 180 years old

--- How old would that have made the twins, Jacob and Esau? ** 180 - 60 = 120

--- Since Joseph was born at the end of the 14 years (just before working 6 years for the herds), how old would Joseph be? ** about 29

--- So would Isaac have known his grandsons by Jacob? ** yes

=== However, in Gen. 41:46, it says that Joseph was 30 when he stood before Pharoah for the first time and was made prime minister, so to speak. So we can see that Isaac died well after the time that Joseph's brothers sold him into Egypt and Jacob thought Joseph was dead. In fact, we can figure that Isaac was about 150 years older than Joseph (Joseph 39 when Jacob went to Egypt at 130, therefore Jacob 91 years older than Joseph. Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born. 60 + 91 = 151). But Isaac would have known his grandsons by Jacob, and Isaac would have seen his son's sorrow at the supposed death of Joseph. Not important facts, but I find them interesting. I like human interest details! It makes the stories more "alive."

--- Okay, Isaac is dead; who buried him? ** Esau and Jacob

=== So they are still at least on polite speaking terms.

=== Let's skip ahead for one verse to see where Isaac was buried.

*-- Gen. 49:31 Where was Isaac buried? ** in the Cave of Macpelah

--- Who else is buried there before Isaac? ** Abraham, Sarah, and Rebekah

=== This death of Isaac at this point in the story is just wrapping up the life of Isaac. Just as in ch. 25 Abraham's life was wrapped up before it even mentioned the twins being born to Rebekah and Isaac, though Abraham lived for 15 years after Jacob and Esau were born. In the same way, Isaac's life is wrapped up at the end of ch. 35, but he doesn't actually die until some years after the end of ch. 37. But Isaac was no longer important to the "story."

CHART

REVIEW:

-- After the disaster at Shechem, where did Jacob go and why? ** Bethel, because God said to

-- What did they do first? ** got rid of idols and religious articles, bathed, and changed clothes (cleaned themselves)

-- What 2 things happened at Bethel ** (1) God renewed His promise to Jacob, (2) Deborah died

-- Where did they go next and what happened there? ** to Bethlehem, Benjamin born, Rachel died

-- What immoral things happened at tower of Edar? ** Reuben lay with his father's wife Bilhah

-- Who does Jacob then finally meet and where? ** Isaac at Hebron

-- Who died at the end of the chapter at what age? ** Isaac at 180

-- Who buried him? ** the twins, Jacob and Esau

-- Where and with whom? ** with his parents and wife in the cave of Machpelah

APPLICATIONS:

- ** If we have anything that could be used as an idol, we should get rid of it.
- ** Even though we are Christians, it is all right to mourn our loved ones when they die.
- ** When we do something wrong, often people find out about it!
- ** God is God of everyone, everywhere, and we should remember that.
- ** God keeps His promises.

Chapter 36: Descendants of Esau

=== Well, we now have Jacob back with his father Isaac and settled there. He had already peaceably met and parted from his brother, Esau, some time before. But now we come to ch. 36, a short chapter that just seems at first glance to be stuck in here with no purpose. But we're going to think about that anyway.

-- First, though, how did chapter 35 end? ** with the twins (Jacob and Esau) burying their old 180 year old father Isaac

=== However, as I said last week, at this point, Moses (who wrote this down over 200 years later) just jumped ahead some years at the end of Chapter 35 and finished Isaac's life, even though, chronologically, there will still be stories of Jacob and his sons in the next chapters that happened before Isaac died. But Isaac doesn't play a part in them, so he is just buried here at the end of ch. 35 and not mentioned again later.

=== But we need to remember that Genesis is concerned mainly with telling us about the forming of the Jewish nation through which God chose to reveal Himself to the world and through which the Messiah would come. There are lots of people who figure in the story but then drop out of it, but often the loose ends are tied up, so to speak, before going on. And as we come to ch. 36, we will see that it is just another little aside in the storyline, a tying up of some loose ends.

=== Before we go on, though, let's very briefly recall a few of those loose ends that were tied up for us. The Bible opens "in the beginning" with the story of Creation, the Fall, the birth of the first children, and the murder of the Abel, and then we come to the last half of ch. 4.

--- Who is talked about there? ** several generations of the descendants of Cain

=== But Cain is no longer important to the storyline. He was important as evidently being the first born child of Adam and Eve (first born child of mankind!) and also as being the first murderer -- of his godly brother Abel who was then replaced by the godly Seth who became the ancestor of Noah who became in turn the ancestor of all mankind. But we have no further use for Cain now in the storyline, so he was just nicely wrapped up here in ch. 4, his loose ends tied up, we might say. But it then goes on to give an extensive list of descendants of Seth, the ancestor of Noah, who is important to the storyline.

=== Then we have the world getting evil and the Flood and how Noah and his 3 sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth come through the Flood and are blessed by God.

--- Through which son will the Jewish nation come? ** Shem

--- But then what does the first half of ch. 10 deal with? ** several generations of two of Noah's sons Ham and Japheth

=== That ties up their loose ends, doesn't it? And then Ham and Japheth are dropped, because they are no longer important to the storyline of how the Jewish nation was to be formed, were they?

=== Then comes the tower of Babel and the confusion of languages and the scattering of the nations in ch. 11. And it goes on to give an extensive list of descendants of Shem, the ancestor of Abraham. Finally then we come to Abraham and his nephew Lot and their adventures.

--- Whose life is wrapped up at the end of ch. 19? ** Lot's

=== It mentions Lot's sons/grandsons whose descendants will figure as enemies of the Jewish nation, but that is all we will ever hear about Lot himself. He's no longer important of himself.

=== Then we go on with the life of Abraham.

--- Why is he going to be important? ** because he will be the "father" of the Jewish nation

--- What happens to Abraham in 25:7-11? ** he dies at the age of 175 and is buried by his sons Ishmael and Isaac

=== And that wraps Abraham up! However, Abraham died 15 years after the birth of Jacob and Esau, even though their births aren't mentioned until later in the chapter! But Abraham was no longer necessary to the story. Then right after the death of Abraham, we come to a handful of verses.

--- What do the verses in 25:12-18 deal with? ** they give the names of Ishmael's sons and Ishmael's death and wrap up Ishmael's life

=== So Ishmael, having buried his father was no longer necessary to the storyline even though he lived for almost 80 years after Abraham died. In fact, he would have been around when the trouble between Jacob and Esau came up in ch. 27 when Jacob had to flee to his uncle Laban, but Ishmael was far away and didn't figure in that at all. Anyway, back to our storyline, now we have Abraham dead.

--- Who will be the important one after Abraham dies? ** Isaac

--- And then who? ** Jacob

=== But Isaac led a fairly uneventful life, so there really isn't much about him in the Bible except in regard to blessing the "wrong" son. So now let's skip over to ch. 35 to tie up another loose end.

--- What happens in 35:28-29? ** Isaac dies and is buried by his sons Esau and Jacob

=== And that neatly wraps up about Isaac's life doesn't it?

=== But chronologically Isaac doesn't die until a few years after the end of ch. 37. At the time of Isaac's death, Jacob and Esau were 120, and Jacob's sons were all grown up and married and having children of their own. And at the time of Isaac's death, Isaac's grandson Joseph was 29 and had already been a slave in Egypt a few years and is in Pharaoh's prison. Only a year after Isaac's death Joseph would be interpreting Pharaoh's dream and becoming prime minister of Egypt. All of these events we've mentioned overlap each other, don't they? But the lives of the various people are just wrapped up when they are no longer important to the storyline.

--- And what, very briefly, is that storyline? ** how the Jewish nation is formed

=== And that brings us to today's chapter. Because in that same way now ch. 36 is going to wrap up about Esau, as he is no longer necessary to the telling of this story of the formation of the Jewish nation. All of ch. 36 is just a telling of Esau's wives and sons and grandsons and of some of Esau's neighbors and their sons. We aren't going to go into them in any detail at all, but there are a few interesting things we're going to take up. So we aren't going to read all of this chapter; we're not even going to read much of it!

*-- Gen. 36:1 What is Esau's nickname, what does it mean, and where did he get it? ** Edom, "Red", seemingly from the red lentil stew for which he had sold his birthright, though he was also all red when he was first born as well

=== Don't read them aloud, but look at verses 2-5 and tell me 3 things:

--- (1) How many wives did Esau have? ** 3

--- (2) What nationality were they? ** 2 were Canaanites; one was Ishmael's daughter

--- (3) How many sons did Esau have? ** 5 -- Ishmael's daughter and one Canaanite wife each had one son; the other Canaanite wife had 3 sons

--- Who was Ishmael, Esau's father-in-law? ** Esau's uncle; his father Isaac's half brother (son of Abraham and Hagar)

=== So Esau's wife would have been his ½ first cousin.

--- Why had Esau married the daughter of Ishmael (28:8-9)? ** because after he found out that Jacob had been sent away to marry a relative because his mother couldn't stand his Canaanite wives

*-- Gen. 36:6-8 Did Esau seemingly have daughters? ** yes

--- Was Esau a poor man? ** no, he had many herds

--- Where was Esau evidently living when he got his herds? ** Canaan

--- Why did Esau leave Canaan? ** Jacob, who had the birthright, had so many herds that the land couldn't support both Jacob and Esau's herds

=== Now, there are 2 possible ways this could have happened, that I can see. (1) It could have been that Esau had made his headquarters with Isaac, traveling with his herds, and had just been grazing his herds in Seir in Edom at the time that Jacob came back. Then after Jacob came back, Esau moved to Edom. Or (2) Esau had known that Isaac's herds belonged to Jacob even though Jacob was up in Haran with Laban. Isaac was rich and had many herds (which were in actuality Jacob's now), so Esau had already moved to Edom before Jacob's return. But we aren't given the details, but I don't think it is important.

=== Edom is the mountain and plateau country between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akabah. It's about 100 miles long (north to south) and from 20 - 40 miles wide (east to west). I've read that it was a well watered and abundant pasture land. Eventually Petra (with the cliffs full of caves) became its capitol. Later the descendants of Esau, the Edomites, would go out on raiding expeditions and then go back to their impregnable strongholds high up on the rocky gorges. Also, later the Edomites (descendants of Esau) were always bitter enemies of the Jews (descendants of Jacob).

=== The rest of the 36th chapter lists Esau's grandsons (there were 13 of them) and then tells of some of the peoples who lived in the area of Edom. There really isn't anything that I can see there that would be of interest to us, so we're just going to skip it and go on to Chapter 37. Though it does show that there was intermarriage between the dwellers of Seir and Esau's family (Timna, v. 12 and 22). But that would be expected. You marry those with whom you come in contact.

=== But one thing I found of interest that was not there -- it doesn't tell how long Esau lived! I attach no importance to this, but I did find it interesting, especially since it gave Ishmael's age.

REVIEW:

-- What is the purpose of ch. 36? ** to wrap up the life of Esau, tie up some loose ends before going on

APPLICATIONS:

** The Jews are the important nation in the eyes of God.

** Seemingly unimportant details can show us some interesting things.

** We should be careful with whom we or our children associate, since we marry those we are in close contact with.

** These details help show the authenticity of the Bible. A made-up story wouldn't bother with the details.

** Abraham truly did become many nations -- God keeps His promises!

Chapters 37 - 50: Life of Joseph, (details of Jacob's life are also in chapters 42-50)

Chapter 37: Joseph is sold by Brothers as a slave into Egypt

(Get out the Genesis Time Line Chart and just point to things as you talk about them.)

=== I know this next is going to be review again, but let's take a quick look at the Time Line and get a picture again of just where we are going. We don't want to lose sight of the forest for the trees! Genesis has 50 chapters and covers almost 2400 years, over 1/3 of the history of man. The first 1656 years (including Creation and the Fall) are covered in only 5 chapters. The next 5 chapters deal with Noah, the Flood, the immediate post-flood period, and the genealogies of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. So the first 11 chapters of the book of Genesis deal with approximately 2000 years, about 1/3 the history of mankind. This leaves the remaining 39 chapters to cover a period of only about 350 years from the call of Abraham until the death of Joseph with all of Jacob's descendants in Egypt.

--- The next 13½ chapters, Chapters 12 - 25 deal with what? ** the life of Abraham from the time he is 75 years old until his death

--- He was 175 when he died, so how many years are covered in those 13 chapters? ** only 100

=== 11 Chapters for 2000 years, and 13 chapters for only 100 years! We can begin to see what God considers to be important!

=== The next 2½ chapters tell of Isaac's life and get well into Jacob's life, ending as Rebekah entreats Isaac to send Jacob off to her brother Laban for a wife.

=== The next 8 chapters after that cover between 25 and 30 years, the time between Jacob's leaving his parents and going up to Haran to his uncle, Laban, and the time he leaves Laban, meets Esau, Simeon and Levi wipe out a town, and they all get back to Isaac in Hebron. Then we have 1 chapter listing Esau's descendants. And that's where we ended in the last lesson.

=== The remaining 14 chapters of Genesis deal mainly with the life of Joseph. So, we have been studying about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for the last 25 chapters. From now on Joseph will be the main character for the rest of the book of Genesis (14 more chapters). Ten of these chapters will cover only a 10 year period. Remember, Genesis has 50 chapters, and all but 11 of these chapters deal with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph -- about 350 years!

--- Now why does God spend so much time telling about these 4 men? ** because the Bible is a book of God's dealings with man, and God chose to reveal Himself through the Jews, so He tells us in Genesis how the Jews came to be, how the Jewish nation came into being

=== The Old Testament is a history book of the Jews and how God worked with them, His chosen people.

--- But, again, why are the Jews so important? ** they are God's chosen people, God chose to reveal Himself to the world through them, and the Saviour of mankind, the Messiah, came through them

=== So, God decided to make a nation to call His own. These were chosen from among all of the demon worshipping nations. He does it by selective breeding, as we saw in our genealogy chart. This nation starts with Abraham about 400 years after the Flood. It didn't take men long to go into paganism!

--- How many children did Abraham have? ** 8

--- From how many of these children does the Jewish nation come? ** only one, Isaac

--- And who was the mother of Isaac? ** Sarah

--- What relation was she to Abraham besides being his wife? ** his half-sister

Do a quick chart of this interrelationship on the white board as I go along. A copy of this chart is *included in "Teacher Helps" at the end of this booklet of lessons.)*

--- How many children did Isaac have? ** 2

--- Who was the mother of those children? ** Rebekah

--- What relation was Rebekah to Isaac besides being his wife? ** his cousin in different ways because of the intermarriages

=== 1st cousin once removed (twice!) and 1st cousin twice removed (again, twice) -- remember, he would be related to Rebekah both through his father and through his mother because they were half siblings!

--- From how many of these children of Isaac does the Jewish nation come? ** again, only one, Jacob

=== The Arab nations came from Abraham's other sons and from his grandson Esau. God truly made Abraham a father of nations plural!

--- How many children does Jacob have? ** 13, 12 sons and 1 daughter

--- From how many do the Jews descend? ** 12, the sons

--- And what relation besides being his wife were the mothers of 8 of those sons? ** Leah and Rachel were his cousins in several different ways

=== I won't go into the details of the relationships here, but again Jacob would be related to his 2 wives through both of his parents (who were several times first cousins) as well as through both his paternal grandparents Abraham and Sarah (who were half brother and sister). It gets complicated! First cousins, twice cousins, etc.!

=== So God was really making a close relationship among the patriarchs of the Jewish nation, wasn't He?

=== And now God really gets down to making the Jewish nation. But remember, the Canaanites are a cursed people and involved in all sorts of idolatry and wickedness. If this budding Jewish nation were to stay there in Canaan, they would certainly start making covenants with the Canaanites and intermarrying with them. This would inevitably lead them into idolatry and probably into being assimilated into the pagan nations in Canaan. For a nation to last, it has to be a united, strong, firmly established nation.

=== Also, according to the Bible dictionary, the unsettled desert tribes regularly came in and raided the settled towns and tribes in the land of Canaan. This inevitably led to walled cities and a constant state of preparation for war. These conditions are not conducive to population explosions, which is what would be needed to make a large, strong nation, which is what God intended to make Jacob and his descendants into.

=== So God decides to put Jacob and his sons into an incubator, so to speak, where they can become a large nation. They are shepherds, so God is going to put them into a lush, peaceful pasture land where they can settle down and raise large families in peace until they are "as numerous as the sand of the sea or the stars of the heavens". After they are a very large nation, then God intends to make them strong and tough and cohesive.

--- So how will God do that; where can they "incubate," live in peace and prosperity for a number of years while they grow in number? ** why, in Egypt, of course!

=== But God needs to get them down into Egypt first, and then to isolate them there as well, doesn't He? We all know the story, but let's quickly look ahead at it again as a preparation for these last chapters of Genesis.

--- How will the Lord do that, get Jacob to take his family to Egypt? ** by sending the famine

--- But why would they want to stay in Egypt? ** because Joseph would be in a very high position and would see that they got favored treatment

=== So the Lord will send honest, honorable Joseph down there first to become prime minister of

Egypt. Then, after Joseph is firmly in charge, God will send a famine. He'll use this famine to drive Jacob and his other 11 sons down into Egypt. In that they are relatives of the prime minister, they will get favored treatment and a choice of land. So they will settle down in this peaceful country where they will be not only protected by the powerful Joseph, but be pretty much isolated in Goshen. Goshen has excellent pastures and is an area about 900 square miles. And there Jacob's family will settle down and raise absolutely enormous families in peace. And the Egyptians would leave them alone, because the Egyptians despised shepherds! So, again, there would be a lot of intermarrying among themselves.

=== After they've gotten numerous, then and only then will God make them a strong, united nation.

--- And what makes people draw together and present a united front? ** why outside persecution, of course!

=== (We saw that in our own country in my lifetime with the attack on Pearl Harbor in World War II.) So God will have the king of Egypt become their enemy and persecute them and make them tough with hard labor. In Deut. 4:20, God speaks of having made the descendants of Jacob hard in the iron furnace of Egypt.

--- What is made in an iron furnace? ** iron, of course!

=== It doesn't mean that the furnace is made out of iron, of course; it means that iron is made in the furnace!

--- What is the strength of iron compared to other metals? ** very strong

=== So, in summary, God decided to make a nation of His own. He selected a man (Abraham), inbred the race with intermarriage and re-intermarriage, then He will isolate them from contamination in a fertile, secure land (Goshen in Egypt) where they can incubate and grow into a multitude. Then when they are great in number, God will harden them up with affliction (slavery, the "iron furnace" of Egypt) and get them ready to return to and conquer and hold the land that He had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

=== In the next few chapters of Genesis we'll be considering how God prepares to send them into Egypt to settle Goshen's secure, rich pastures. But I wanted us to get the whole picture here first -- why Joseph was so important that so many chapters are going to be devoted to him. So now let's get back to our chapter of Genesis.

*-- Gen. 37:1 So where did Jacob finally settle down? ** in Canaan

--- Who else had lived there before Jacob that we know? ** Isaac and Abraham

--- Did this land belong to them? ** no, they were foreigners in it

--- But, though it doesn't say in this verse, did they have any hope of ever owning any of it? ** yes

--- Why? ** because God had promised it to them and their descendants

--- How much of it? ** all of the land

--- For how long? ** forever

--- And does God keep His promises? ** yes

=== So someday...!

*-- Gen. 37:2 Who now enters the picture? ** Joseph

--- And just who is Joseph? ** probably Jacob's 11th son chronologically, but definitely his oldest son by the beloved Rachel

--- How old is Joseph as "our story begins"? ** 17

--- How old would this make Jacob? ** about 108 (77 when leaves home + 14 years of work for wives + 17)

--- How old would that have made Jacob's oldest son? ** about 23 (17 + 6 years after Jacob married Leah)

--- Remember we talked about this last week; is Isaac still alive at this time? ** yes, and for 12 more years

--- What was the work that Jacob's sons did? ** took care of the herds, taking them from pasturage to pasturage

--- Who was Joseph working with one day? ** with his 4 half brothers by Bilhah and Zilpah

--- What are their names, 35:25-26? ** Asher, Gad, Dan, and Naphtali

--- What did they do that day? ** we don't know, but it was bad

--- Was Joseph involved in the bad thing? ** no

--- What did Joseph do? ** told Jacob

=== Now, people often tend to condemn Joseph as a tattle-tale. But the Bible doesn't. The Bible neither commends him not condemns him. It just states a fact. So, perhaps he was wrong in telling, but also, perhaps he wasn't. So we should be careful in condemning people without knowing the details.

--- By the way, this doesn't mention the sons of Leah; any ideas why not? ** I don't really know, but my guess is that they were with other herds somewhere else

=== Remember, Jacob had lots of herds, and he may well have spread his sons out among the various herds. But we aren't really told.

--- Would this incident have endeared Joseph to his 4 half-brothers? ** no

=== We aren't told, but my feeling is that there may well already have been quite a bit of rivalry among the sons of the various wives. Remember back when Jacob had been afraid that Esau might try to kill them all?

--- In what order had Jacob placed the sons (and their mothers) so that Esau would meet them? ** first the sons of the concubines with their mothers, next Leah's sons and Leah, and lastly just Joseph and his mother Rachel

=== So jealousies could already have been festering, it seems to me, though we aren't told that in the Bible, so we need to be careful. Joseph's reporting the bad conduct of Bilhah and Zilpah's sons wouldn't have made them like him more! But the Bible doesn't give us details on their feelings here.

*-- Gen. 37:3-4 Did Jacob play favorites among his sons? ** yes

--- Who was his favorite? ** Joseph

--- Should Jacob have known better by experience than to do that? ** yes, from his own experience with his parents and Esau

--- What excuse is given here for Jacob's favoring Joseph? ** that Joseph is the son of Jacob's old age!

--- Were there any sons that we know for sure to be younger than Joseph? ** yes, Benjamin, by several years

=== Also there is a possibility that Zilpah's sons may have been younger. But since Jacob had all of his sons except Benjamin in about 7-9 years, it seems to me that all of them were sons of his old age!

--- Why, really, do we know that Joseph was the favorite son? ** because he was the oldest son of the beloved Rachel

=== Also, we will find out that he is very honest, honorable, and reliable. These are endearing qualities, too!

--- What special favor did Jacob show Joseph? ** made him a coat of many colors

=== This coat is thought to have been a long garment with sleeves. "Many colors" could literally mean "many breadths or widths". So it may have been a coat made from a bunch of strips of material, maybe of different animal skins or at least dyed different colors. Quite a few people think that such a coat was a sign of at least a high position or even that the person was the "heir apparent". If that were the case (and I'm not sure it was), then such a gift would show all the other brothers that Joseph was to be the head of the family someday. Also, some people think that sleeves could have meant that the person wearing it wouldn't be working. I don't know if either of those ideas is correct, but whatever the coat was, it was definitely a sign of favor.

--- If it is true as so many people think that this coat showed a superior position in the family (as opposed to just being a nice coat), why might Jacob have chosen a much younger son (in order of birth) rather than one of the earlier born sons? ** Joseph was the oldest son -- by the wife that Jacob had wanted

=== Also, Joseph was an honest, godly young man as opposed to (1) the firstborn Reuben who lay with his father's concubine (mother of 2 of his half brothers), (2) 2nd and 3rd born Simeon and Levi who had treacherously wiped out and looted a city, and (3) the sons of the concubines that had done something they evidently definitely shouldn't have done. That left only Leah's 3 youngest sons (Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun) and the very youngest son of all, Benjamin, at whose birth Rachel had died.

--- How did the other brothers react to this show of favoritism? ** they hated Joseph and didn't talk nicely to him; couldn't say a decent word to him

=== And, remember, they may well have already been jealous of Joseph, as we just said earlier.

=== I rather doubt if we can include Benjamin here among the brothers who hated Joseph. After all, Benjamin and Joseph were full brothers and there would have been at least several years between them.

=== I find it interesting that this coat is mentioned after the event with the sons of the concubines. Did Joseph's telling him this have anything to do with Jacob's giving him the coat? Or was Joseph just the favorite and would have gotten the coat anyway? We aren't told. We also aren't told how long a time there was between these 2 events. A week? A couple of years? We don't know. We also don't know how long between the giving of the coat and the next verses.

*-- Gen. 37:5 What did Joseph have? ** a dream

--- To whom did he tell this dream? ** his brothers

--- And how did they react to his dream? ** they hated him even more

*-- Gen. 37:6-8 What was the dream? ** about all of them binding up grain stocks in the field, and his sheaf stood up and the brothers' sheaves bowed to his

--- By the way, are we told how many sheaves there were that bowed down to Joseph's sheaf? ** no

--- Do you imagine that Joseph knew what this dream meant? ** I'd think so, though we aren't told

--- Did Joseph's brothers need to have this dream explained to them? ** no

--- What interpretation did the brothers on their own give to this dream? ** that Joseph was saying that he would be their ruler

--- And what was the reaction of the brothers to the dream? ** they hated Joseph even more

=== Some people say, "See, Joseph was bragging and that really made his brothers mad." But we aren't told how Joseph told it or what his attitude was. He may have been bragging, or he may just have been recounting a strange dream. And remember, Joseph was a prophet of God. So we should be careful about judging people's motives. Especially when it is just written down and we can't see their faces nor hear their voices.

*-- Gen. 37:9-10 What happened to Joseph again? ** he had a second strange dream

--- What was it this time? ** that the sun, moon, and stars bowed to him

--- How many stars? ** 11

--- To whom did Joseph tell this dream? ** to his father and brothers

--- Again, did they need to have the dream interpreted for them? ** no, it was obvious

--- In fact, who was the one who spoke up with the interpretation? ** his father Jacob

--- And what was the interpretation that Jacob gave to the dream? ** that Joseph's father, mother, and brothers would bow down to him

=== I guess that sister Dinah didn't count!

--- By the way, why didn't Joseph tell the first dream to his father? ** it only concerned him and his brothers

=== But this second dream also concerned his father, didn't it?

== Now let's do some thinking.

--- Who was Joseph's mother? ** Rachel

--- Where was she? ** buried in Bethlehem!

--- So how could this dream be fulfilled? ** Leah was the first wife of his father, therefore she was in a sense the mother of all of the children; she was at least definitely his step-mother (as well as his aunt)

*-- Gen. 37:11 What was his brothers' reaction to this dream? ** they were jealous of him

--- What had been his father Jacob's reaction in v. 10? ** he was indignant and rebuked Joseph

--- But did Jacob just entirely disregard the dream, v. 11? ** no, he was thoughtful

=== Again we don't know how long between the dreams and these next verses. Again, it could have been a week, a month, or several years.

*-- Gen. 37:12 Where did Jacob's sons go at this time? ** Shechem

--- Why? ** to feed their flocks

--- Can the owner of vast herds stay in one spot? ** no

--- Why not? ** they have to go from place to place as the grass is eaten up

=== Remember in the Old West how the cowboys would move the herds from place to place. So that is what is happening here. Also, Jacob had all sorts of flocks, and sheep destroy good pastures by pulling up the grass by the roots, not just munching on the blades of grass. So it took longer for the pastures to regenerate. That's why cattlemen hate shepherds!

--- Anyway, again, where did Jacob's sons go at this time to feed the flocks? ** to Shechem

--- Is this a new place for them? ** no, they had lived there a few years earlier

--- What had happened there at the earlier time? ** it's where Simeon and Levi had treacherously wiped out and sacked a city after Dinah was defiled

*-- Gen. 37:13 Who had v. 12 said had gone to Shechem with the flocks? ** "his brethren"

--- And who do we now find is not with the flocks this time? ** Joseph

=== I've wondered why Joseph wasn't out with the flocks also, but he may have had a different job at home. If the coat meant that he didn't do manual work and was the future head of the family, it could have been that he had other responsibilities at home, and he would be nearer his father who was so crazy about him. Or perhaps if Jacob had noticed the jealous and angry feelings of the other brothers, he may have decided to keep Joseph pretty much away from his brother. But we aren't told why Joseph isn't with them.

--- But what does Jacob decide to do? ** check up on his sons and flocks

--- And who was he going to send to do this checking up? ** Joseph

--- What are a couple of reason that perhaps might be why Jacob wanted his sons checked on ** (1) he might have been afraid that the inhabitants of the neighboring cities around Shechem might want to avenge the destruction of Shechem, or (2) he might have wondered if they were misbehaving again, or (3) he might have just wanted to be sure that they were all right and weren't having any problems with the flocks, or (4) that the brothers might get sick

=== Any number of things might happen, but we aren't given the reason in the Bible.

=== We'll find out that they were a long way away from home.

=== From later in the story it sounds as if Joseph just went off by himself to check on them. So it would seem to me that it probably wasn't too dangerous. Of course, someone might want to attack herders and steal the herds, but Joseph would just be a young man off by himself.

--- Was Joseph reluctant or willing to do as his father asked him? ** willing

*-- Gen. 37:14 What did Jacob tell Joseph to do? ** to go see how the flocks and his brothers were and then come back and give a report to Jacob

--- Where were Jacob and his family making their headquarters at that time? ** Hebron

--- Who else had made Hebron his headquarters? ** Abraham and Isaac

=== It is about 50 miles from Hebron to Shechem. So that's not just a 15 minute walk. Even if he were on horseback or camelback, it would take 2 or more days. My feeling is that Joseph was just walking, but we aren't told if he were walking or riding or what.

--- Anyway, so Joseph left Hebron, and where did he get to? ** Shechem

*-- Gen. 37:15 What happened when Joseph reached the Shechem pastures? ** he couldn't find the his brothers and the herds

--- Who saw Joseph wandering around? ** a man of the area

--- And what did this man do? ** asked him what he was looking for

*-- Gen. 37:16-17 What did Joseph answer the man? ** that he was looking for his brothers

--- Then what did Joseph ask the man? ** if he knew where they were feeding the flocks

--- What did the man answer? ** that he'd heard them say they were going to Dothan

=== So it sounds to me as if the brothers were well known. The man seems to have known who Joseph was talking about. This was probably about 10 years after the slaughter at Shechem, give or take a few years. But something like that would be talked about for a long time. Also, they had lived a while at Shechem and might still be known by sight by the neighboring people. Or it could just be that maybe they dressed differently and were recognized by that. We aren't told.

=== Dothan, where the brothers were going with the flocks, is about 10 or so miles northwest of Shechem and had excellent pastures.

--- Did Joseph now just go back home and report to his father and tell him that the brothers had gone on to Dothan? ** no

--- What did he do instead? ** he went on to Dothan to check on them himself

=== He was sent to do a job, and he's going to do it.

*-- Gen. 37:18-19 When did Joseph's brothers see him? ** when he was quite a ways away

--- What did they refer to him as? ** "this dreamer"

--- So what were they thinking about? ** the 2 dreams he'd told them about that we read about earlier

--- How did they seem to feel emotionally about this visit? ** with hatred and envy

--- What did they start doing then? ** plotting to kill him

*-- Gen. 37:20 What plan did they come up with? ** first to kill him, then to throw him in some pit

--- But how would they account to their father for Joseph's disappearance? ** they'd say that some wild animal had killed him

--- What triumphant conclusion did they add to their plans? ** after they did this to Joseph, they'd "see what happened to his dreams"

--- Are we told which brother came up with this plan? ** no

--- Does it sound as if only one of them wanted to do this? ** no

=== It sounds as if at least several of them were in on it, doesn't it? Notice it says "they" and "said to one another." Besides, if only one or two had wanted this, the others would have complained and told them to stop such ideas.

*-- Gen. 37:21-22 We aren't told if all of the other brothers (except probably Benjamin) were there, but which one do we know was there? ** Reuben

--- What was his family position? ** he was the oldest of all of the brothers and was the son of Leah, the first wife

--- About how old did we figure he'd be? ** about 23 or maybe a little more (Joseph is about 17 or a little older by now and was born right about the time that Jacob had finished working for his wives + 6 years since Reuben was evidently born within the first year of marriage)

--- Did Reuben go along with the plan? ** no, he wanted to save Joseph

--- How did he go about saving Joseph? ** he suggested that they not shed blood but just throw him in a pit

=== This pit may well have been dug to catch and hold water, a cistern. They were often dug out of the solid rock and were often more narrow at the top, which would make it just about impossible for a person to climb out of by himself. I've read that they might also be used as a sort of prison. This is the same word that hundreds of years later was used for the place that they threw the prophet Jeremiah into.

--- If they did this, just threw Joseph into the pit and left him there, what would be the result for Joseph as far as the other brothers were concerned? ** he'd die of thirst

=== So he'd be dead, but they wouldn't literally have shed his blood! Big difference!

=== As the oldest son, one might have thought that Reuben could have stood up to the others. But perhaps he felt completely outnumbered. But we aren't told.

--- How did Reuben figure his plan would make Joseph's situation any better? ** Reuben planned on getting Joseph out of the pit when the others weren't around and then taking him back to their father

--- We aren't told or even given a hint that might make us think this, but might Reuben perhaps have been an ulterior motive? ** perhaps

--- If he did, what might it have been? ** that if he brought Joseph back he might get back into his father's favor after the awful thing Reuben had done with Bilhah, his father's concubine

=== But, remember, we aren't even sure at this point if Reuben knows that his father knows. We weren't told that. So we need to be careful. Perhaps he was just more tender-hearted, or perhaps he felt more responsible but couldn't stand out boldly against his brothers. Years later Jacob will describe Reuben as being "unstable as water."

--- But as far as the others knew, if they carried out Reuben's plan, would that really make Joseph's lot any better? ** no

--- Why not? ** because Joseph would just die a lingering death from thirst instead of being killed outright

--- But what advantage would it be to the brothers? ** they wouldn't actually have shed his blood themselves

=== Rather crooked thinking!

*-- Gen. 37:23-24 What did the other brothers think of Reuben's plan? ** they went along with it

=== Imagine letting their brother die of thirst. Really merciful!! But, remember, these aren't just a bunch of inexperienced teenaged boys. These are men probably in their early twenties, two of whom had plotted against and slaughtered an entire town.

--- What did they do before they grabbed him and threw him into the pit? ** they took off his special coat that Jacob had given to Joseph

--- What was in the pit into which they threw Joseph? ** nothing

--- Specifically what was not in the pit? ** water

*-- Gen. 37:25 After throwing their brother into a pit to die of thirst, what do these kind-hearted young men do? ** sat down to eat their lunch!

--- Who came along just then? ** a group of merchants with a caravan of camels

--- Who were these merchants according to this verse? ** Ishmaelites

--- Who was Ishmael? ** the oldest son of Abraham by Hagar

=== So these Ishmaelites would have been some sort of cousins, wouldn't they?

--- How did these Ishmaelites travel? ** on camels

--- What merchandise did they carry in their caravan? ** spices, ointments, perfumes

--- Where had they come from? ** Gilead

=== The prophet Jeremiah speaks of a balm in Gilead, and remember hearing the song, "There is a Balm in Gilead"?

--- But where have we heard of Gilead before in Genesis? ** Laban caught up with Jacob in Mt. Gilead some 11 years earlier (Joseph was about 6 when they left Haran and was now at least 17)

=== Gilead is about 40 miles directly east of Dothan (where the brothers were then), across the Jordan River.

--- And where were these merchants going with their cargoes? ** Egypt

=== It's about 300 miles from Dothan to Egypt. So we can get a little idea of the extensive commerce of this time. These weren't just a bunch of cavemen living off by themselves!

=== I've read that this balm and spices were used both for medicine and embalming in Egypt. So this would have been quite a valuable cargo.

*-- Gen. 37:26-27 Who now comes up with a new plan? ** Judah

--- Which one is Judah? ** he's the 4th son of Leah

--- What was his plan? ** to sell Joseph rather than kill him

--- But what reason does Judah give for selling their brother as a slave instead of killing him, v. 27? ** "after all, he is our brother!"

=== What an example of brotherly love!

--- Though we aren't told all of Judah's thinking, what good would this plan of Judah's do them? ** (1) they wouldn't actually be killing Joseph, (2) they wouldn't have to worry about hiding the body, and (3) they'd make money out of it

=== But I wonder if perhaps Judah were having second thoughts about actually killing his own brother. But if they sold him, they would at least be rid of the hated brother, but they wouldn't have his literal blood on their hands. However, we aren't given any indication of what Judah was thinking, so we need to be careful not to speculate.

*-- Gen. 37:28 What did the other brothers think of this plan of Judah's? ** they agreed to it

--- Did they carry it out? ** yes

--- How much did they sell their brother for? ** 20 pieces of silver

--- How much would this work out per brother? ** 2 pieces of silver each

=== Again, Benjamin wouldn't have been with them. He was much younger than the rest of them, probably about 10 or 11 years old.

--- Now, who does this verse say they sold Joseph to? ** it mentions both Midianites and

Ishmaelites

--- And what had v. 25 called them? ** just Ishmaelites

--- Who was Midian? ** one of the sons that Abraham had by Keturah, the woman he married after the death of Sarah

--- And, again, who was Ishmael? ** Abraham's son by his concubine Hagar

--- So what relationship was there between Ishmael and Midian? ** ½ brothers

--- But why does it say both Midianites and Ishmaelites here? ** remember, Abraham had sent his sons by Keturah off with gifts; Ishmael was already out in the desert, and Keturah's sons evidently had joined him, and Midian was one of these sons

=== These sons of Abraham's 2 concubines had evidently all sort of lived together. Abraham had given them gifts before being sent off, but Abraham hadn't wanted trouble between them and the son of promise, Isaac.

=== So these are the descendants of Abraham's son Midian that Joseph is being sold to.

--- How would the Ishmaelites and Midianites be related to Jacob's sons? ** half-cousins, probably 2nd cousins by now

=== I wondered how they knew they were Ishmaelites. Perhaps the way they were dressed. Or perhaps Ishmaelite caravans were fairly commonly known. But we aren't told, and it really isn't important to the story.

=== I wondered if there were any chance that the caravan would go through Hebron, but I saw one map where they traced the route as cutting over to the seacoast and then going down. I don't know if they knew what they were talking about, but it does seem to make more sense to go along the coast where it would probably be flatter than to go down through the mountains where Hebron was. Also, I doubt if the brothers would have sold their brother to them if they'd figured the caravan would then go through their own home town of Hebron where Joseph might be spotted!

--- At any rate, where was Joseph going to end up? ** in Egypt

--- As what? ** a slave

--- Do we have any indication that these merchants checked to see the credentials of the brothers or of Joseph? ** no

=== The brothers sold him and the merchants bought him. Period. That's all we're told. We aren't told, but I'm wondering if Joseph were protesting. Let's not speculate too much, but let's look at one verse that comes further on.

*-- Gen. 42:21 Was Joseph just going along passively with all of this? ** no, he begged them not to do these things to him

=== That could have been both as they were putting him in the pit and leaving him and when they pulled him out and sold him, but we aren't given the details.

--- But how had the brothers reacted to the pleadings of their brother? ** they'd ignored him

=== But back to ch. 37 as Joseph is being sold to the Midianites.

*-- Gen. 37:29 Who hadn't been there when Judah came up with and carried out this plan to sell Joseph? ** Reuben

--- Who was it who had first suggested putting Joseph in the pit instead of just killing him right away? ** Reuben

--- Why? ** to keep the other brothers from killing Joseph and then he'd planned to rescue Joseph and take him back to their father

=== Reuben could well have been off checking the flocks somewhere, but we aren't told. At any rate, Reuben wasn't in on this sale, and now he's back.

--- Where did Reuben go? ** to the pit

--- What did he find when he got to the pit? ** no brother!

--- So what was Reuben's reaction when he found that Joseph was gone? ** great grief and distress

--- What did Reuben do? ** he tore his clothes

*-- Gen. 37:30 Then what did Reuben do after tearing his clothes? ** went to see his brothers about it

--- How does Reuben refer to Joseph? ** as "the child" or "boy"

--- At least how old was Joseph at this time, v. 2? ** 17

=== And, remember, there aren't that many years between them! But Joseph was younger than the others by a year or so, and probably 6 years or so younger than Reuben.

--- Who does it seem that perhaps Reuben thinks might be held responsible when their father finds out something has happened to Joseph? ** himself

--- Why might this have been? ** perhaps because he was the oldest

*-- Gen. 37:31-32 So how did the brothers solve the dilemma of accounting for the disappearance of Joseph? ** they killed a kid and dipped Joseph's coat of many colors in the blood and claimed to have found the coat

--- To whom did they send the bloody coat? ** their father Jacob

--- With what message did they send the coat? ** "we found this; is it Joseph's?"

=== I find it a little confusing here. Did they send the coat by someone and then come later? Or did they take the coat to their father themselves? Both the KJ and the NAS say "they sent" and "they brought." At any rate, Jacob got the coat.

=== I had a thought.

--- Would the 10 brothers necessarily just have been out with all those flocks by themselves? ** no

--- Who might have been with them? ** slaves

=== Remember, Jacob was rich in herds and slaves. It would seem to me that he would have sent slaves along to help his sons and whom his sons would oversee. If so, how would they know the slaves wouldn't tell? But we aren't told. Perhaps they were just by themselves. Or perhaps they could threaten the slaves or bribe them. We're just given no details here at all.

=== But anyway, the coat and message are sent to their father.

*-- Gen. 37:33-34 Did Jacob recognize the coat? ** yes

--- What did Jacob think had happened? ** that a wild animal had killed and eaten Joseph

--- Had the brothers actually said that a wild animal had killed and eaten Joseph? ** no, they were practicing deceit

=== "We found this; do you recognize it??"!

--- What did Jacob do then? ** went into high mourning by tearing his clothes and wearing sackcloth

--- How long did Jacob mourn for Joseph? ** we aren't told except that it was many days

*-- Gen. 37:35 What did Joseph's brothers then try to do? ** comfort their mourning father

=== Imagine how they must have felt trying to comfort Jacob when they knew that they were responsible for the sorrow and were lying about it as well. Now they're going to have to live with this!

--- It says that "all of his sons and daughters" tried to comfort him; how many daughters do we know about? ** one, Dinah

--- So how do you explain the "all of his daughters"? ** I would think it refers to his daughters-in-law, the wives of his sons

--- Were they all successful in comforting Jacob? ** no, he refused to be comforted

--- How long did Jacob say that he planned on mourning for Joseph? ** all of his life

=== And remember, from the ages given, the blind Isaac was still alive. How much was he told about this great sorrow? Again, we aren't told.

*-- Gen. 37:36 After this scene so full of emotion, we come to a coldly stated fact; what is it? ** that Joseph was sold

--- To whom? ** Potipher

--- Who is Potipher? ** an important man in Pharaoh's court

=== Some translations say that Potipher was an officer of Pharaoh's and the captain of the guard. The word "guard" has to do with killing and is even applied to cooks who butcher animals. Other translations say that he was one of Pharaoh's courtiers and the chief executioner. Others that he was Pharaoh's bodyguard. Some think he was the chief cook. Whatever his specific job, he was important. He wasn't just some common man on the street who'd bought a slave.

=== An interesting thing, though. The word for "officer" comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to castrate", "a eunuch"! It was a common practice for centuries to castrate men who were put in charge of things. If Potipher were actually a eunuch, this might help explain the next chapter a little better!

CHART -- catch up for Isaac, Jacob, and start Joseph's

REVIEW:

-- Who is this chapter mainly about? ** Joseph

-- How do Jacob's sons get along? ** they're jealous of Joseph

-- Why? ** (1) because their father openly favored Joseph and gave him special attention, and (2) because of Joseph's prophetic dreams about his being ruler over them

-- What special thing did Jacob give Joseph? ** a many colored coat

-- Where does Jacob send Joseph? ** off to check up on his brothers who are tending the herds in Shechem

-- What do the brothers decide to do as they see Joseph approaching? ** kill him

-- What plan does one of the brothers come up with instead? ** to throw Joseph into a pit instead and just let him die

-- Whose plan was this and why? ** Reuben's; he planned on rescuing Joseph and taking him back to their father

-- Who came up with another plan during Reuben's absence and what was the plan? ** Judah suggested selling Joseph to the Ishmaelite traders instead and getting some money for him

-- But again, which older brother wasn't in on the plan to sell Joseph? ** Reuben, the oldest of all of them

-- How did they account for Joseph's disappearance? ** they dipped his coat in the blood of a baby goat and claimed just to have found it, letting Jacob figure that Joseph had been killed by wild animals

-- Was Jacob deceived by this bloody coat? ** yes

-- And what was his reaction? ** he mourned greatly and wouldn't be comforted, saying he'd grieve until he died

-- Was Joseph's grandfather Isaac still alive at this time? ** yes

APPLICATION:

** We shouldn't show favoritism with our children.

** There may be times that we have to report people's conduct, but we should be careful about it and not just be tattling.

** Try to get along with people so that hatred doesn't come up.

** Stand up against evil even if it's awkward for you.

** God has mysterious (to us) ways of working out His plans.

** Envy can have serious consequences, so we should avoid it.

** We should be careful not to give others a cause to envy us if possible.

** What men do to be evil, God often means for good, so trust Him.

Chapter 38: An aside with Judah and Tamar

=== Joseph has been sold into slavery by his brothers. The Ishmaelites have taken him down to Egypt where he was bought by Potiphar, a high officer of the king. But before the Bible goes on with Joseph, there is a chapter telling about Judah. Most nations will sort of color the truth, leaving out the bad parts; but the Bible tells things just as they are -- warts and all! Christians sometimes point to this and say this is just one more evidence that the Bible is divinely inspired -- no one would ordinarily air their nation's dirty linen like the Bible does! And in this chapter we have some mighty dirty linen aired!

*-- Gen. 38:1 When does this chapter take place? ** "at that time"

--- Presumably at what time? ** right after ch. 37

--- And what had happened in ch. 37? ** the 10 brothers had sold Joseph to be a slave

--- And who is this chapter going to be about? ** Judah

--- Who is Judah? ** Jacob's 4th son

--- Who was Judah's mother? ** Leah

--- Does it sound from as though Judah had up to now been still living with his other brothers? ** yes

--- But what does he do now? ** he leaves his family and goes to live elsewhere

--- Are we given any idea of why he might have left his family and gone off by himself? ** no

=== The Bible gives us absolutely no idea of why he left or for how long. I wondered if it had anything to do with a guilty conscience over having sold Joseph and then seeing his father mourn so, but we aren't told that. Also, it could just be that Judah was leaving temporarily in order to take flocks to another pasturage. We're just given no details at all. In later chapters we find Judah apparently with his brothers and father again. So let's not speculate on this.

--- With whom did Judah live after he left his family? ** Hirah

--- Where was Hirah from? ** evidently from Adullam

=== Adullam is about 10-15 miles northwest of Hebron. And again just to help us to remember that the Bible is all connected, Adullam is where one of the caves was that about 700 years after this chapter, Judah's many-times-great-grandson David and his men hid in as David was trying to hide from King Saul. These aren't isolated places and people! But back to our story here about Judah. We have Judah moving away from his family.

*-- Gen. 38:2 What did Judah do after moving? ** got married

--- Her name isn't given, but what was her father's name? ** Shuah

--- What nationality was his wife? ** Canaanite

=== Of course, they were living in the land of Canaan, so I imagine that most of the sons of Jacob married Canaanite wives, though we aren't told.

--- But were there any relatives that they might have looked up and have married instead? ** yes

--- Who? ** descendants of Ishmael and of Keturah's 6 sons by Abraham (including Midian), and of Esau

=== But he would have had to travel a ways to find them, and usually people will marry those they see all the time, those who live right near them. We're given no idea of what God thought about whom the brothers should have married. Actually, we're given no idea of whom they did marry except for this one wife of Judah and later the wife of Joseph, so let's go on.

*-- Gen. 38:3-5 How many sons did Judah have by his wife? ** 3

--- What were their names? ** Er, Onan, and Shelah

--- And where were they living when Shelah was born? ** Chezib

=== This is thought to be a town about 3 miles northwest of Adullam.

*-- Gen. 38:6-7 How did Er, the first son, get a wife? ** Judah chose her for him

--- Have we heard earlier specifically about a parent's choosing the wife for the son? ** yes, Hagar chose Ishmael's wife

=== Of course, Abraham and Isaac specified where they wanted their daughter-in-law to come from, too, though they didn't choose the actual girl.

=== Just a thought here.

--- Who chose Judah's wife? ** Judah

--- And who's choosing the wife for Judah's son? ** Judah

=== Judah was a real "take charge" type of man! He sees a situation, and he takes care of it. Remember, he's the one who came up with the idea of selling Joseph instead of killing him. (We aren't told, but I wonder if he were having second thoughts about killing his brother, not just wanting to get some money.) Later we'll see that he is the one who got Jacob to let them take Benjamin go to the Egypt with them. And later we find the kings were descended from him. A "take charge" man, a leader, who produced leaders. But back to our story.

--- What was the name of Judah's daughter-in-law? ** Tamar

--- What do we know about Er? ** he was wicked

--- Are we told how he was wicked? ** no

--- But what was the result of Er's wickedness? ** the Lord killed him

=== But, remember, Er was half Canaanite and was living among Canaanites. Who knows what deviltry he might have been up to. I don't know if this has to do with his wickedness, but it something to think about.

--- Are we told how the Lord killed Er? ** no

--- Are we told if Judah knew that Er's death was because the Lord was displeased with Er? ** no

=== Just the bare facts are given; no details.

*-- Gen. 38:8-9 Did Er have any children by Tamar? ** no

--- How do you know that? ** because Judah then married Tamar off to the second son Onan in order to produce an heir for Er

=== Remember, much later in the Law of Moses, if a man died without children, it was the duty of the next brother to marry the widow and have a child for his dead brother. So it seems that this was a custom from early times, even before it became part of the law of Moses.

--- Did Onan like the idea of having a son for his dead older brother? ** no

--- But did that keep Onan from having marital relations with his new bride? ** no

--- So what did Onan do so as not to have a son for his brother? ** used a natural, but risky, form of contraception

--- Does it give any indication here of how often Onan slept with Tamar? ** no

*-- Gen. 38:10 Who realized what Onan was doing? ** the Lord

--- And what did the Lord think about that? ** He didn't like it

--- So what did the Lord do? ** killed Onan for it

=== Now, many Christians use these verses to say that all forms of contraception are wrong.

--- But does it seem to you that the main sin of Onan, the sin that he was killed for, was simply that he was using a method of contraception? ** not to me

--- What seems to have been his main sin, the one for which he was killed? ** his attitude, not wanting to have an heir for his brother

--- Again, are we told how the Lord killed Onan? ** no

--- And again, are we told if Judah knew the cause of Onan's death? ** no

=== Now, I can't help but wonder why Onan didn't just refuse to marry Tamar. That would have taken care of the problem. But perhaps he didn't want to stand up to his father, perhaps he would have felt disgraced for not doing his brotherly duty, or perhaps he liked the idea of another wife. There may be other "perhapes" as well, but we aren't given any details on what people were thinking -- including Tamar! So let's not speculate.

*-- Gen. 38:11 What did Judah tell Tamar to do now? ** go back to her family and wait there until Judah's 3rd (and last!) son Shelah was old enough to marry her

--- Are we given any idea of how old Shelah was at this time? ** no

--- Did Tamar do what Judah said? ** yes

--- But what seems to have been his real reason for sending her back home to her family? ** he is afraid to marry off his last son to Tamar for fear that Shelah will die also

--- Again, have we been told if Judah knew the reasons why his 2 older sons had died, that the Lord had done it for their wickedness? ** no

--- But if he is afraid of having Shelah marry Tamar, does Judah release Tamar from this engagement? ** no

--- Does that sound to you as if he were playing fair with Tamar? ** not to me

=== Again, we're not told what Tamar thought of this arrangement. And it probably wouldn't have made any difference; she was just a woman!

*-- Gen. 38:12 After a while, what other unhappy event came for Judah? ** his wife died

--- And then evidently after an appropriate time of mourning, what did Judah do? ** went to Timnath where some of his men where shearing the sheep

=== My guess is that he owned lots of herds and that he was checking up on them now to see that things were being done right.

=== Timnath, from what I can figure, is about 10 miles from where Judah was living.

--- Did Judah go by himself up to Timnath? ** no, his friend Hirah went with him

--- And where had we heard of Hirah before, v. 1? ** he was the friend Judah stayed with when he first left home

=== Now it sounds to me as if Judah were still separated from his brothers, but we can't be sure of that. And I don't think it makes a lot of difference. But this does take place some years after he first left them in v. 1, since he'd married, had 3 sons of marriageable age (whatever that was!), and is now widowed.

*-- Gen. 38:13-14 Who hears about Judah's trip? ** Tamar

--- And who was Tamar? ** Judah's daughter-in-law

--- What do we learn of the custom of widows in v. 14? ** that they wear special clothes that show they're widows

=== Like when we dress in black to show mourning, I guess.

--- Anyway what did Tamar do about her clothes? ** she took off her widow's clothes and seems to have dressed up like a prostitute

--- Then what did she do? ** she went and sat down by the roadside on the way to Timnath

--- Why, according to v. 14, did she do this? ** because she knew that Shelah, Judah's youngest son, was grown up, but Judah hadn't had him marry her

=== She's been sitting all of this time in her father's house as a widow waiting for Shelah to grow up and marry her, but she realizes that this just isn't going to happen. That was not a good situation for a woman, just to be a widow at home.

--- Are we told how long this had been going on, that she was widowed? ** no

*-- Gen. 38:15-16 Who saw Tamar sitting by the roadside? ** Judah, her father-in-law

--- Did Judah recognize her? ** no

--- So did Tamar's disguise work? ** yes, Judah thought she was a prostitute

--- What was evidently a sign of a prostitute then, v. 15? ** that she would cover her face

--- What did Judah say to his disguised daughter-in-law? ** he asked to go have sex with her

--- Since she was pretending to be a prostitute, what natural question did she ask? ** what he would pay her

*-- Gen. 38:17-19 What did Judah say he would pay her? ** he'd send her a baby goat when he got to where his flocks were

--- Again, what natural question did she ask? ** what he'd give her so that she'd know he'd keep his promise

--- What pledge did Judah offer? ** he didn't offer; he asked her what pledge she wanted

--- So what did she ask for? ** his signet, bracelets, and staff

=== This signet or seal may have been what was used either with or in place of a written signature. Whatever it was, it was probably pretty important. The staff probably wasn't just some stick that he'd picked up in the field and was carrying, but may have been a special one that belonged only to Judah. Then the KJ says "bracelets", but some other translations say "cord." It comes from a word that means like twine, so this may mean something like a cord that Judah carried his signet on. But I don't think the exact meaning of these possessions of Judah is important. What is important is that they were something personal of Judah's, and that perhaps Judah could have been identified by them.

--- Did Judah agree to this? ** yes

=== I find it interesting that Judah was so willing to part with these perhaps important items to just a prostitute. To me it seems that either he was desperate, or he figured she was trustworthy and he'd get them back.

=== I also find it interesting that before this disgraceful event on Judah's part, the Bible mentions that Judah's wife had died!

--- Anyway, what was the result of Tamar's strategy? ** she got pregnant by her father-in-law

--- After Judah left, did Tamar continue playing the part of a prostitute? ** no, she went back to wearing her widow's weeds

*-- Gen. 38:20 Did Judah plan on paying the "prostitute"? ** yes

--- Why would he bother actually paying her? ** (1) it would have been dishonorable not to have paid her, and also (2) he would want his personal property back

--- What pay did he send to her? ** a kid

--- Why a kid? ** because that is what he had promised her in v. 17

--- Did he take the kid to her himself? ** no, he sent his friend who had come out to the shearing with him

--- So had Judah kept this incident to himself? ** no, he'd at least told his friend

--- Did the friend give Tamar the kid? ** no

--- Why not? ** he couldn't find her

*-- Gen. 38:21-23 Did the friend just look for the harlot and then go back to Judah? ** no, he asked some of the men of the place about her; he really tried to find her

--- What did the men answer? ** that they had no prostitute there

== I found it interesting that the word for harlot or prostitute here in v. 21 and 22 is a different Hebrew word than that for harlot back up in v. 15. The word back up in v. 15 is the word that was used to describe how Simeon and Levi said that Shechem had treated their sister Dinah. Back there in verse 15, the word is simply an immoral person who is a harlot. The word back in v. 15 is very often used to describe how the Jews were acting when they turned away from the Lord, to describe spiritual prostitution. But here in verses 21 and 22, there is an entirely different Hebrew word, and the NAS correctly translates this one as a temple prostitute. This kind of prostitution is definitely tied up with religion. We must remember that this event is taking place in the land of Canaan, and the Canaanites were extremely wicked people with terrible practices in connection with their idolatrous religion. So a temple prostitute was just an accepted thing in their religion. Now, I don't know if Judah were thinking anything about her religion when he saw her or not. After all, it just used the word "harlot" when he saw her, not the word for a temple prostitute. But I find the difference in wording interesting. It sounds to me as if Judah saw just a street walker, so to speak, whereas his friend (probably Hirah) knew to look for temple prostitute. Of course, Hirah probably was an idolater and was familiar with this type of thing. But to get back to our story.

--- Did Judah then say they had to get his possessions back from her at all costs? ** no

--- What did he say about his possessions? ** that she could keep them

--- Why? ** because otherwise he would be shamed, thought contemptuously of

--- Did Judah seem to think that his seal, cord, and staff would then be sufficient pay so that people wouldn't hold him in contempt for not having paid? ** yes

--- What does this seem to say about how going to a prostitute was considered? ** that it was all right as long as you paid her

=== Which, unfortunately, is often the way of thinking in our own society!

*-- Gen. 38:24 When does this verse take place? ** about 3 months after Judah had visited the supposed prostitute

--- And what dreadful news then reaches Judah? ** that his daughter-in-law must have been being immoral, because she was pregnant

--- What did they say that Tamar had been doing? ** being a prostitute

=== Here is the word is the same as in v. 15, an immoral woman, not a temple prostitute.

--- What was Judah's reaction to his daughter-in-law's immoral behavior? ** to have her burned to death

--- Why would Judah have any say-so in this? ** Tamar was his daughter-in-law, and Judah was the head of his own family, so he had authority over his daughter-in-law, even though she was living in her father's house

=== Also, as we said earlier, Judah was a "take charge" kind of man.

=== Here we see the old double standard! Judah hadn't kept secret about going to a supposed prostitute (in that he'd sent his friend to pay her). In fact, he'd "honorably" paid her! But now a woman is accused of being a "wanton", and she should be burned! This woman Tamar was a widow (twice!), and she was expected to stay chastely in her father's house for however many years it took for her father-in-law Judah to decide to give the last son to her as a husband. However, we can see a reason for the double standard, considering the pregnancy!

*-- Gen. 38:25 Did they bring Tamar out? ** yes

--- Does it sound as if Judah were there when they were bringing her out to her execution? ** it doesn't to me

--- Why not? ** because it says she "sent to her father-in-law"

--- Did she just send a verbal message begging for mercy? ** no

--- What did she send? ** Judah's possessions that he had given her and the message, "I got pregnant by the man that this signet and staff belong to; do you recognize them?"

=== I couldn't help but think back to the message that Judah and the other brothers had sent to Jacob, "This we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or no." There is a similarity there! "Whose is this???"

*-- Gene. 38:26 Did Judah recognize the things Tamar sent to him? ** yes

--- But then did Judah try to protect himself by saying that he didn't know whose the things were?

** no, he admitted that they were his

--- What else did Judah have to say about Tamar? ** that she was more righteous than he; that she was not wrong in having tricked him into fathering a child, but that he had been wrong in not having given his youngest son to her

--- So did he have Tamar burned? ** no

--- But did Judah then marry Tamar and sleep with her again? ** no

--- Does this sound as if Tamar had been just living a loose life? ** no, to me it sounds as though she were trying to get the child for her first husband that had been promised to her

*-- Gen. 38:27 What eventually happens to Tamar (and all pregnant women!)? ** she went into labor

--- And what did they discover? ** that she was going to have twins

*-- Gen. 38:28 Who was helping Tamar with this birth? ** a midwife

--- What was the first sign of a baby in this birth? ** a hand that poked out

--- What did the midwife do as the first baby stuck his hand out? ** she tied a scarlet thread on his hand

--- Why would she do that? ** because it was important which was the first born; he would get special blessings and rights and inheritance

--- And what did the midwife say as she tied the red thread to that tiny hand? ** "this is the first born"

*-- Gen. 38:29 Did the rest of the baby follow that little hand? ** no, he pulled it back in

--- Then what happened? ** a baby was born

--- Was it the one with the scarlet thread tied on his hand? ** no

--- What did the midwife say this newborn baby had done? ** broken out, caused a breach

--- So what did they name this baby? ** Pharez

--- Do you have a footnote that says what this means? ** "breach" or "breaking out"

--- Why? ** because he had broken through first ahead of his brother

*-- Gen. 38:30 Then who was born? ** the one with the scarlet thread on his hand

=== So at least they knew the thread hadn't been lost inside the womb! What a tangle those babies must have been in!

--- What did they name this formerly-first-but-now-second baby? ** Zerah

=== Which can mean to rise (as the sun) or appear; it might also mean a rising of light or shine. I don't know why he was named that. From what I found in Strong's Concordance, I don't think the NIV footnote of "scarlet" is valid.

--- Have we had another story with the birth of twins where there was something unusual? ** yes, the birth of Esau and Jacob where Jacob was holding onto the heel of his brother

=== Now this is a disgraceful story! But the Lord can use our sins for His own purposes.

*-- Matt. 1:3 About 1800 years after this disgraceful incident, of whom does one of those twins become the ancestor? ** Jesus!

--- And who, specifically, is mentioned as the mother of Pharez? ** Tamar

=== Again, anyone who knew anything at all about this, would be reminded of the embarrassing situation here. The inspired Bible doesn't hide it's dirty linen. It airs for all the world to see! Secular history would have completely glossed over all of this!

=== By the way, as a complete aside and having nothing to do with this story, I found it interesting that Shelah, the son of Judah who did not marry Tamar, later had children. The first mentioned son (in I Chron. 4:21) is named Er. I would presume he named him this after his dead older brother. I attach no significance to this, and we mustn't speculate but it's just a little human interest detail!

=== Now, I found something else interesting, so let's just quickly look at that.
--- According to 37:2, at least how old was Joseph when his brothers sold him? ** 17
--- And according to 41:46, what age was Joseph as he finally stands before Pharaoh? ** 30
--- But after the 7 years of plenty and into the famine, according to 45:6, how old did he have to be? ** 39
--- So this chapter 38 that we just finished looking at, where Judah got married, had 3 sons whom he married off at an early age (!), then had these twins by Tamar, this all happened before they all went to Egypt, didn't it? ** yes
--- And looking at Joseph's ages, over was period of time would this whole chapter have happened? ** 22 years!
=== See what little details we can get just by looking carefully at seemingly inconsequential details! I thing it's fun! My guess is that Judah left his brothers fairly soon after having sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites.

REVIEW:

-- Who is this chapter about? ** Judah and Tamar
-- Who did Tamar marry first? ** Judah's oldest son, Er
--- What happened to Er? ** the Lord killed him for his wickedness
--- Then at Er's death, who was Tamar given to? ** the second son, Onan
-- Why? ** to raise up an heir for his dead older brother
-- What happened to Onan? ** the Lord killed him, also
-- So what was the cause of death of both of the older sons? ** having displeased the Lord!
-- What did Judah want Tamar to do then? ** go back home and wait until the youngest son was old enough to marry her
-- So whom did Tamar finally have a son by? ** Judah, her father-in-law
-- Does Judah condemn Tamar for having tricked him this way? ** no
-- Who does the oldest son become the ancestor of? ** of King David and eventually of Jesus

APPLICATION:

** It is shameful to have sex outside of marriage.
** We should keep our promises.
** Be careful how we perform our required duties (Onan being killed by God).
** God can even use man's sins for good (Pharez was an ancestor of Jesus).
** We should wait on the Lord.
** We should be careful with whom we associate (not Canaanites!).
** If we're wrong, we should admit it.

Chapter 39: Joseph works for Potiphar; is thrown in prison

=== We had an aside about a disgraceful event in the life of Judah. Now we return to Joseph.

*-- Gen. 39:1 Where is Joseph? ** in Egypt

--- How did he get there? ** his brothers sold him to the Ishmaelites who took him to Egypt and sold him as a slave

--- Who bought Joseph? ** Potiphar

--- Who was this Potiphar who bought Joseph? ** an important courtier of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard

=== As we said before, some say that means Potiphar was the executioner. I think that might be likely, but I don't think we can be dogmatic about that.

--- What nationality was Potiphar? ** Egyptian

=== This pretty much repeats the last v. of ch. 37, doesn't it?

*-- Gen. 39:2-3 Was Joseph bought by Potiphar to work in the fields? ** no

--- Where does it seem that he worked? ** as a house slave

=== Which would be a much better position.

--- How did things go with Joseph? ** very well

--- Why? ** because God was with Joseph

--- At least who noticed that God was with Joseph? ** at least Potiphar, Joseph's master, did

--- What particularly did Potiphar notice was the result of the Lord's being with Joseph? ** that everything that Joseph did went very well; it prospered

*-- Gen. 39:4 What job did Potiphar give to Joseph when he saw that everything went so well with him? ** as an overseer

=== Some people say that perhaps Joseph became a personal servant to Potiphar and then advanced to overseer. But I don't think we can be dogmatic about this either, and I don't think it makes much difference.

--- How extensive was Joseph's new overseer job? ** he was over everything that Potiphar had

--- Now we need to be careful here, but had it sounded back in the first part of ch. 37 as if perhaps Joseph might have had a little experience in overseeing? ** perhaps; that special coat may have put him in the position of sort of overseeing things back home with his father

=== But I don't think we can be 100% sure of this, though. It's just a thought.

--- At any rate, does it sound as if Joseph had the potential for being in charge of things and doing a good job of it, a sort of natural overseer? ** yes

*-- Gen. 39:5-6 V. 4 said that Potiphar put everything he owned under Joseph; what does v. 5 seem to indicate that this "everything" includes? ** all of the house and the fields as well

--- What happened to Potiphar after he made Joseph overseer? ** God blessed Potiphar's household and fields and everything

--- Why? ** because of Joseph

--- How close an eye did Potiphar keep on Joseph? ** he didn't at all

--- Does it sound as if Potiphar trusted Joseph? ** yes, completely

=== I get a kick out of the words that Potiphar only knew the food he ate!

--- What did Joseph look like? ** he was handsome

=== The word "goodly" in the KJ comes from a word that means "an outline having to do with figure or appearance." It seems to indicate that (as the NAS and NIV say) he was well built as well as being handsome.

--- Should that come as a surprise to us that Joseph was handsome? ** no

--- Why not? ** because his mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother (Rachel, Rebekah, and

Sarah) were all very beautiful

=== And they were closely interbred, which would have passed it on even more than normally.

*-- Gen. 39:7-9 What trouble did Joseph's good looks cause? ** Potiphar's wife took a liking to him

--- So what did she try to do? ** to get him to lie with her

--- Now, what had we said that the word "officer" came from when it had referred to Potiphar? ** the word for "eunuch" or "to castrate"

=== If this were actually the case here, this might help explain this present situation a little! But we need to be careful.

--- Anyway, how did Joseph react to these improper advances? ** he refused them

--- What did Joseph tell Potiphar's wife was his own position in her home? ** Joseph was second only to Potiphar, her husband

--- What did Joseph say he had charge of in Potiphar's house? ** everything

--- What did Joseph say he could have of Potiphar? ** everything except Potiphar's wife

--- What 3 reasons did Joseph give for refusing Mrs. Potiphar's advances? ** (1) it would be ingratitude and treachery against a generous and trusting master, (2) she was his master's wife, (3) it would be a sin against God

*-- Gen. 39:10 Was it just a one time thing that Potiphar's wife made improper suggestions to Joseph? ** no

--- How often did she seem to pester him about this? ** often, "day after day"

--- Did Joseph finally give in to her? ** no, he paid no attention

--- Well, at least he would sit and talk to her, wouldn't he; after all, her husband was busy at work every day and she must have been lonely? ** no, he left her completely alone

=== The way he should have done. A very proper and trustworthy young man.

*-- Gen. 39:11-12 One day where did Joseph's duties take him? ** into the house

--- What sensible precaution did Joseph fail to take that day? ** he didn't make sure that there was someone else in the house when he went in to work

--- What did Mrs. Potiphar say to him again? ** to lie with her

=== This is just supposition, I realize, but I wonder if perhaps Potiphar's wife had arranged it so that no one else was around that day. Might she have figured he'd be more willing to be with her if there were no witnesses? But we need to be careful, since the Bible doesn't say.

--- Evidently up until now Potiphar's wife had just been talking; but what does she do now as she tries to entice the handsome Joseph? ** she grabbed his coat and wouldn't let go

--- What did Joseph do? ** he wiggled out of his coat and ran out of the house

--- But what about his coat? ** she still had hold of it

*-- Gen. 39:13-15 What is there "no fury like"? ** a woman scorned

=== Potiphar's wife would have liked to have been unfaithful; now we will see that she is treacherous and a liar as well.

--- To whom does she lie? ** to the men of the house

--- But it has just said that the other men were all out; how do they happen to be there now? ** she called them

--- What does she call Joseph (v. 14)? ** a Hebrew

=== In that she specifies "Hebrew," I wonder if Hebrews were looked down on in general. I don't know, though. But at least he's a foreigner, and often foreigners are looked down on or even hated.

--- At any rate, what did she say the Hebrew had done? ** tried to rape her

--- How does she claim to have stopped him? ** by screaming

--- How does she account for having his coat? ** she said that when she screamed, he got scared and ran out leaving his coat

*-- Gen. 39:16-18 After telling this lie to the people of the household, what did Potiphar's wife do with Joseph's coat? ** kept it with her

--- Until what time? ** until her husband came home

--- What did she do then? ** she repeated the whole lie to her husband

--- Again, did she use Joseph's name? ** no

--- How did she identify him? ** as "the Hebrew slave you brought us"

=== Sort of puts the blame on Potiphar, doesn't it?! It reminds me of Adam with his answer to God for his sin, "the woman Thou gavest me!"

*-- Gen. 39:19-20 What emotion did Potiphar (Joseph's master and her husband) have after hearing his wife's story? ** he became very angry

--- And what did he do about it? ** he threw Joseph into prison

--- What kind of prison was it? ** where they kept the king's prisoners

--- How would Potiphar have access to this prison? ** he was an important man of Pharaoh's court and may even have been the chief executioner

=== We'll get more details about this prison in the next chapter. Many people think that Potiphar had his doubts as to the truth of his wife's story. They say that if he had really believed the whole story, he would have had Joseph executed instead of just putting him into prison. But I don't think we can be dogmatic about that.

*-- Gen. 39:21 Who was with Joseph in prison? ** God

--- How did God show His mercy to Joseph? ** by making the keeper of the prison like him

*-- Gen. 39:22-23 How did the keeper of the prison show his liking for Joseph? ** he put Joseph in charge of the whole prison

=== An overseer again!

--- How close of an eye did the keeper of the prison keep on Joseph? ** he didn't

--- How did this arrangement work out? ** things went very well in the prison

=== So the keeper of the prison considered Joseph very trustworthy, didn't he?

--- There are similarities between Joseph's life in Potiphar's household and his life in prison; what are they? ** (1) Joseph was a slave in both, (2) he was favored by the master in both cases (Potiphar and the head jailer), (3) Joseph was given free rein in both cases to run everything eventually without supervision, and (4) God was with Joseph in both, so (5) everything Joseph did prospered in both cases

=== Now comes a big question: Is all of this fair? Joseph is a godly young man. He was the favorite son of his father and seems to have had special duties, so his jealous brothers sold him into slavery. So by treachery and lies he became a slave. Okay, then he's bought by one of Pharaoh's high courtiers and becomes a favorite with him and becomes the overseer of his master's house and goods. And now through treachery and lies he lands in prison. Let's look ahead for just one verse.

*-- Gen. 50:20 Can such misfortune be the will of a just God? ** yes

--- In this case we can see why; why was it? ** God was working all of this out for the good of Jacob and his family in the coming famine

=== And also for many other people, including the Egyptians.

=== And, remember, God wants them down safely in Egypt where they can be isolated and become a very large nation. Then God will harden them up and send them back into the promised land of Canaan to conquer it. This is God at work bringing His plans to pass.

CHART

REVIEW:

-- In a sentence or two, what is this chapter about? ** the slave Joseph prospers in Egypt, then is thrown into prison through treachery, and prospers in prison
-- But for a little more detail, who bought Joseph after his brothers had sold him to the Ishmaelites? ** Potiphar, an important man in Pharaoh's court
-- What did Joseph end up doing for Potiphar? ** running everything
-- What put a stop to his position as Potiphar's overseer? ** Potiphar's lying wife accused Joseph of trying to rape her after he spurned her advances
-- So what happens to Joseph? ** he gets thrown into prison
-- Where is God all of this time? ** carrying out His plan!

APPLICATION:

** If we work well for someone, it is usually noticed and appreciated.
** Be careful not to get into situations where someone could make trouble for us.
** Be careful not to be alone with someone of the opposite sex.
** We should teach our children these sensible precautions, too.
** Our difficult situation may well be something that will be good for us later down the road.
** We should always work our best, no matter what circumstances may be.
** "If God be with us, who can be against us."
** God can take care of us no matter where we are.

Chapter 40: Joseph Interprets the Baker and Butler's Dreams

=== So we have Joseph in prison -- and running it beautifully!

-- How did Joseph get in prison? ** his master Potiphar's wife lied about him after he spurned her advances

*-- Gen. 40:1-2 When does this chapter take place? ** "after these things"

--- After what things? ** after ch. 39 where Joseph is thrown into prison and becomes a trustee in charge of it

--- What 2 new characters now enter the picture? ** the king's chief butler and chief baker

=== This butler seems to have been the king's cupbearer. I understand that was quite an important and trusted position. The cupbearer not only brought the king his drink, but he would taste it first to make sure it wasn't poisoned. The word for baker means "to cook, especially to bake."

--- Where are the head butler and baker? ** in jail

--- Why? ** because Pharaoh was mad at them

--- Does it say why Pharaoh was mad at them? ** no, just that they'd "offended" him

=== Some people think that there had been some suspicion of poisoning. But the Bible doesn't say.

--- And who was in charge of this prison? ** Joseph

*-- Gen. 40:3 Where does this say that the prison was? ** in the house of the captain of the guard

--- And who had we heard earlier was the captain of the guard, 39:1? ** Potiphar

=== The jails were a part of an important person's house, sometimes of a king, often of the captain of the guard. Sort of like the old castles used to have their own dungeons.

--- Who else was also in this prison? ** Joseph

=== So it sounds to me as if Potiphar had a prison at his home, but he had someone in charge of the prison, a keeper of it. When Potiphar had Joseph put the in prison there at his home, he turned Joseph over to this "keeper of the prison," who in turn made a trustee out of Joseph for him to run things, and now the king has thrown his chief butler and chief baker into this same prison there at Potiphar's house.

*-- Gen. 40:4 Who took care of the king's chief butler and baker there in prison? ** Joseph

--- Why? ** because the captain of the guard (Potiphar?) told him to

--- How long were they in prison? ** "a season"

=== I don't know how long a "season" is, but it wasn't just a few days.

=== We aren't told, but I would imagine that Joseph did some talking with the king's chief butler and chief baker as they're all in prison together.

--- What kinds of things would they be able to tell Joseph? ** they could probably tell him many of the details of Pharaoh's household, about the people there, how things were run, etc.

=== Remember, they were the chief butler and the chief baker, not just scullery boys. They were in charge of important areas of the king's household, so they could have been special "tutors" who were unknowingly to everyone (except God, of course, who had this all planned!) giving Joseph a college course about the king's household. Remember, Joseph is going to end up in charge of it! And there were probably other prisoners there, as well, who would be able to teach him about the household.

--- What does 39:20 call the people in this prison? ** the king's prisoners

=== So this wasn't just a jail for the ordinary man on the street who'd jay-walked or had a parking ticket or the like. So again we see the hand of God in preparing Joseph for an important governmental job. He has the best tutors! But the Bible doesn't actually come out and give us these details; we sort of have to read between the lines. I can't feature their not having talked together.

*-- Gen. 40:5 What happened to the head butler and head baker after they had been in prison a while? ** they both had a dream with personal significance to them

--- How long between their two dreams? ** they were both on the same night

--- Does it say how long they had been in prison at this time? ** no, just the "season" of v. 4

*-- Gen. 40:6-7 How did these dreams affect the butler and baker? ** they made them sad

--- Who noticed this sadness? ** Joseph

=== So he was an observant man, noticing the condition of those around him. A good trait for someone in charge of things.

--- When did Joseph notice this? ** that morning after they'd had their dreams

--- So what does he ask them? ** why they're looking so sad

--- Notice again what v. 7 calls the prison they're in; where was the prison? ** in "his lord's" or "his master's" house

=== Again, this shows, in my opinion, that the prison was connected to Potiphar's house.

*-- Gen. 40:8 Why did the chief butler and baker say they were looking so sad? ** because they had had a dream, but they didn't understand what the dreams meant, and there was no one to tell them

--- Who does Joseph say knew the meanings of dreams? ** God

--- Then what did Joseph tell them to do? ** to tell him their dreams

--- If God knows what dreams mean, why did Joseph tell them to tell him? ** we aren't told, but evidently he knew that he had some sort of an "open line" to God

=== We aren't told, but I can't help but wonder if Joseph knew that his own dreams had been prophetic. I also wonder if Joseph had had any other special prophetic experiences. He certainly seems confident that God will supply him with the answers concerning the baker and butler's dreams.

*-- Gen. 40:9-11 Were they willing to tell Joseph their dreams? ** yes

--- Who told his dream first? ** the head butler

--- What was the dream? ** that in front of him was a vine with 3 branches that budded, blossomed, and bore grapes; then the butler had Pharaoh's cup and took the grapes and squeezed their juice into the cup and gave it to the king

*--- Gen. 40:12-13 Was Joseph able to interpret this dream? ** yes

--- When did he say the events of this dream would happen? ** in 3 days

--- Where did he get the 3 days? ** from the 3 branches

--- And what would happen in 3 days? ** the head butler would be back at his old job of giving the king his cup of wine

*-- Gen. 40:14-15 Then Joseph asks a favor in return for having interpreted the dream.

--- To whom does Joseph ask the butler to speak after he's back at his old job? ** to Pharaoh

--- What does he want Pharaoh to hear about? ** how Joseph had been kidnapped and was now in prison though he'd done nothing wrong

--- What good does Joseph expect it to do if the butler tells the king? ** he thinks it might get him released

=== Perhaps he thinks this might get him released from slavery (thought I doubt it), but he definitely seems to think it could help get him out of prison.

=== Notice he says he was kidnapped. He doesn't mince words.

*-- Gen. 40:16-17 What gave the baker courage to go ahead and tell Joseph his dream? ** he saw that the meaning of the butler's dream had been good

--- What was the baker's dream? ** that he had 3 white baskets, the top one having lots of baked good for the king in it, and then the birds came and ate the baked goods out of that top basket

=== Some translations, instead of saying "white baskets" say "white bread". The word is "white." But I don't think it makes any difference whether the "white" refers to the baskets or the bread.

--- How did the butler carry the baskets in his dream? ** balanced on his head

=== My book of customs says that men's necks became so strong from carrying things on their heads that they could carry a load so heavy that it would take 3 men to lift the load up to the head! It also said that in ancient Egypt, only the men carried loads on their heads; the women carried them on their shoulders. I don't know where they got this, but I thought it was interesting.

*-- Gen. 40:18-19 Was Joseph able to interpret this dream also? ** yes

--- When would the baker's interpretation take place? ** in 3 days

--- What showed that it was to be in 3 days? ** the 3 baskets

--- What did Joseph tell the head baker that his dream meant? ** that in 3 days Pharaoh would have the baker executed, and the birds would eat him

=== There are differences of opinion as the method of execution here. Some people think it just means to hang the man. Others think he might be impaled. The means isn't the important thing, though, so let's just leave it that he would be executed.

*-- Gen. 40:20-23 What holiday came? ** Pharaoh's birthday came

--- When? ** 3 days from the time of the dreams

--- How did Pharaoh celebrate his birthday? ** he made a feast for his servants

=== My guess would be that "servants" means his officers and "cabinet", so to speak, not a feast for the housemaids and footmen.

--- What did Pharaoh, the king, do on his birthday? ** he put the butler back as chief butler again and had the chief baker executed

=== My book also says that kings would often pardon people on their birthday.

--- So what proof do we have here that God really was with Joseph in a special way? ** Joseph's interpretation of the head butler's and head baker's dreams came true

--- How did the butler show his gratitude for Joseph's kindnesses to him? ** he didn't; he forgot all about Joseph

-- Why might he have forgotten Joseph? ** (1) maybe he just put the whole experience behind him, or (2) maybe he didn't want to remind Pharaoh that he had been under the king's displeasure at one time

=== But all we're really told here is that he forgot Joseph. So we'll let it go at that.

--- Now, does this necessarily mean that all of our dreams have prophetic meanings? ** no

CHART

REVIEW:

-- Who was also put into prison with Joseph? ** the chief butler and chief baker

-- Who was put in charge of them? ** Joseph

-- What happened to them one night? ** they each had a troublesome dream

-- Who was able to tell them what their dreams meant? ** Joseph

-- Did the interpretations that Joseph gave them come true? ** yes

-- So far, though, has this incident been of benefit to Joseph? ** no

APPLICATION:

** Remember people who have done us favors and asked us for a favor in return.
** Don’t expect our own dreams to be prophetic.
** We should wait on the Lord.
** God has a plan!

Chapter 41: Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams; Becomes Prime Minister

--- Where did we leave poor Joseph last week in chapter 40? ** in prison

--- How did he get into prison? ** through the lies of his master's wife

--- How did he occupy his time in prison? ** by running the prison!

--- Might Joseph perhaps think he stood a chance of getting out of prison? ** yes

-- Why? ** because he had correctly interpreted the dreams of the chief butler and chief baker and had asked the butler to speak up for him to Pharaoh when he was restored to his position

-- Did the butler do that? ** no, he forgot Joseph

*-- Gen. 41:1-4 How much time has passed? ** 2 full years

=== Now, we aren't told if this is the total time Joseph was in prison or if this is how long it was that Joseph was hoping the butler had told Pharaoh about him after the butler was taken back into Pharaoh's service.

=== By the way, it would have been during these 2 years that his grandfather Isaac died back in Hebron.

CHART

--- What happened after these 2 full years? ** Pharaoh had a dream

--- What was the dream? ** Pharaoh was standing by the river, and 7 fat cows came out of the river and ate in the marshy meadow there; then 7 skinny cows came up out of the river, stood next to the 7 fat cows, and ate them up

--- This river isn't specifically named here, but which is the only "river" that could be if it were in Egypt? ** the Nile

--- Then after having the dream, what happened? ** the king woke up

*-- Gen. 41:5-7 What did Pharaoh do after waking up with this strange dream? ** he went back to sleep and had another strange dream

--- What was this dream? ** 7 nice fat heads of grain grew up all on one stalk; then 7 withered heads of grain came up on another stalk; and then the withered heads ate up the fat heads

--- What effect did this dream have on Pharaoh? ** it woke him up

--- Does it seem as if this had been a real seeming dream? ** evidently so, since "behold, it was a dream"

*-- Gen. 41:8 What was Pharaoh's state of mind that morning? ** troubled

--- Were the two dreams easily forgotten? ** no

--- What makes you say that? ** because in the morning they worried him so much that he called all of his wise men and magicians (astrologers)

--- What kind of help did they give him? ** none

*-- Gen. 41:9-13 Who then spoke to the king? ** the head butler

--- Where have we heard of him before? ** he was in Joseph's jail and had his dream favorably interpreted by Joseph and the interpretation happened

--- Why did the chief butler come to Pharaoh? ** he remembered his and the baker's dream that Joseph had correctly interpreted

--- What did the chief butler tell Pharaoh about Joseph? ** that Joseph had correctly interpreted the 2 dreams in prison

--- Why do you think the butler says he "remembered his faults that day"? ** because Joseph had asked the head butler to speak to the king about himself, and the butler had forgotten

=== I find the wording of the KJ and NAS in v. 10 and 13 interesting. The chief butler used the third person rather than the second person about the king when speaking to the king. In v. 10 the chief butler says "Pharaoh" did such and such rather than "you" did. Then in v. 13, he doesn't say "you" restored me and hanged him. He says "he" did. I guess you didn't speak to the king directly in the second person. I don't attach any significance to this, though; it was probably just a matter of customs.

*-- Gen. 41:14 Did Pharaoh evidently take much credence in the chief butler's story? ** yes

--- What makes you say that? ** because he immediately sent for Joseph

--- How did Joseph prepare to see the king? ** he shaved and changed his clothes

=== The Egyptians shaved their heads and beards; the Hebrews didn't. I don't know if Joseph had been dressed as a Hebrew or an Egyptian while in prison, but it seems that perhaps Joseph now dressed as an Egyptian and it would have been an insult to Pharaoh if he hadn't shaved. Also, you'd want fresh clothes on before appearing to the king.

--- Did they just take their time in getting Joseph ready to see Pharaoh? ** no, they hurried

*-- Gen. 41:15 What did Pharaoh tell Joseph that he'd had? ** a dream

--- But what problem did he say he had about this dream? ** that no one could interpret it

--- What reputation did Pharaoh say that Joseph had? ** as an interpreter of dreams

*-- Gen. 41:16 What did Joseph think of that reputation? ** that it was false

--- But Who did Joseph say could do something about it? ** only God

--- Did Joseph seem to think God would give the interpretation? ** yes

=== It seems to me that Joseph was pretty confident that God would give him the answer. And he isn't just talking to a couple of men in prison here; he's talking to the king of the most powerful country in the world.

=== We're going to skip verses 17 through 24, since they are simply a repetition or verses 2 through 7. He just retells his dream detail by detail. However, we're going to glance at an additional detail.

--- What is the extra detail that is given in v. 21 that we didn't have in v. 4? ** that after the skinny cows ate up the fat cows, they didn't look any better themselves

--- And then in v. 24, what did the king tell Joseph about his own magicians? ** that they couldn't any of them interpret the dreams

*-- Gen. 41:25 What was the first thing that Joseph said about the dreams, first part of verse? ** that they both meant the same thing

--- And why did Joseph say that Pharaoh had the dreams? ** because God was showing Pharaoh was He (God) was going to do

--- How soon was God going to do this? ** very soon (He was "about" to do it)

*-- Gen. 41:26-28 What do the "sevens" of cows and heads of grain represent? ** groups of seven years

--- Then what specifically did the 7 skinny cows and empty heads of grain represent, end of v. 27? ** 7 years of famine

--- And then what does Joseph repeat is the reason for the dreams? ** that God is showing Pharaoh what God is going to do very soon

*-- Gen. 41:29-32 What was the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams? ** there would be 7 years of great plenty all through Egypt followed immediately by 7 years of terrible famine all through the land

--- How bad would that famine be, v. 31? ** so bad that the years of plenty would be forgotten

--- Why had God given 2 different dreams if they both meant the same thing, v. 32? ** that showed that God really meant this and that it would happen very soon

--- Why were the symbols in the dreams God gave Pharaoh appropriate? ** they were symbols of food, both vegetation and meat

=== Now, let's do a little thinking. Cattle eat vegetation, and they get fat or lean in good or bad years depending on the amount of food. So the heads of grain would not only show what kind of food the cattle would have, it would show what kind of everyday food (grains) the people would have. So it actually all depends on how good the vegetation is.

--- But what determines how good the vegetation is? ** water

--- And where did the water for Egypt come from? ** the Nile river

=== Egypt itself didn't get rain. Instead, the Nile's overflowing its banks each year is what made the good crops. Also, they had an irrigation system from the Nile.

--- So what does this dream say is actually going to happen? ** that the Nile not only wouldn't be overflowing for 7 years, it sounds like it would be very low in water

--- But what causes the Nile to be full and overflow? ** the rain in the mountains

--- So what is going to be the cause of the fulfillment of these dreams? ** no rain in the mountains

=== So lack of rain in the mountains meant that the Nile wouldn't overflow, which meant there would be no crops, hence famine.

=== So the river was a very appropriate symbol for the cattle to come up out of. And the river would cause the grain either to grow or not. The river (rather the rain in the mountains that supplied the river) would be the cause of both the plenty and the famine.

=== I also wonder if the scorching east wind mentioned in v. 6 meant that it would be especially hot those years as well, which would dry the land out even more. But I wouldn't be dogmatic about this.

*-- Gen. 41:33-36 Joseph is just a slave up from prison that morning; he interprets the king's dream; then uninvited, what does he dare to do in these verses? ** give advice to the king!

--- What is the advice he gives? ** for Pharaoh to (1) pick a wise man and put him in charge of Egypt, (2) appoint other men to be in charge of gathering grain during the good years, and (3) store this gathered grain in big storehouses in preparation for the famine

--- What would be the rate of tax on the crops in the 7 good years? ** 1/5 (20%) goes to Pharaoh

*-- Gen. 41:37 Did Pharaoh believe the interpretation that Joseph gave him? ** yes

--- What did he think of Joseph's unsolicited advice? ** that it was good

--- But what about his courtiers, what did they think? ** it sounded good to them, too

--- What makes you say that? ** because he decides to follow Joseph's advice

--- Do they seem to even consider the fact that Joseph is just a slave? ** no

*-- Gen. 41:38-39 Where does Pharaoh seem to think he'll have to go to find such a wise man to rule in Egypt in preparation for the coming great famine? ** no farther than the man standing right in front of him!

--- Why did Pharaoh seem to think Joseph was the man for the job? ** because the Spirit of God was in him

--- How did Pharaoh know that the Spirit of God was in Joseph? ** because Joseph knew what Pharaoh's dreams had meant when no one else did -- including the "wise men" of Egypt

*-- Gen. 41:40 So did Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of this gathering of the grain? ** yes

--- Just how much power would Joseph have? ** he'd be second only to Pharaoh

-- Where would Pharaoh only be greater than Joseph? ** on the throne itself

--- Had Joseph earlier had a similar experience only on a much smaller scale? ** yes

--- Where? ** with Potiphar; Joseph was second only to Potiphar in Potiphar's house; also in the prison where he had been put in charge of everything

--- But what would this experience of having been in charge in Potiphar's house but then landing in prison have taught Joseph? ** (1) that even though a person might get to a high position, he could still fall mighty far, might fast! Also, (2) that God really is in control of everything and had been preparing him for this prestigious position

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*-- Gen. 41:41-42 Was Joseph to rule just the household of Pharaoh? ** no, he was to rule all Egypt

--- How did Joseph know this wasn't just a lot of polite talk on Pharaoh's part? ** Pharaoh gave him his ring, a fancy robe, and a gold chain

=== In other words, Joseph was made the prime minister of Egypt.

--- What significance was there to the ring? ** it was Pharaoh's signet or seal.

=== "Signature" and "signet" both come from the same root, "sign". Having ones "ring" meant having ones signet ring which they used to sign papers. So what Pharaoh had actually done was give power of attorney to Joseph whereby Joseph could now sign Pharaoh's name to anything he wanted to. This certainly showed Pharaoh's trust in Joseph. I think we can clearly see the hand of God in this.

=== The gold necklace was something that was only worn by men of high rank. It showed he was a high nobleman, so to speak.

=== The word for "fine linen" actually means "bleached stuff", so it may mean very white clothes. It has been suggested that perhaps this meant that Joseph was made a member of the priestly class, the highest class in Egypt to which the king also belonged. They wore white robes.

=== It may seem peculiar to us that a slave would be put into such a position as prime minister, which is what Joseph was. However, in Turkey in the 1400's and 1500's the sultans did this, putting slaves in as the grand vizier. But other than those instances, it just doesn't seem to have happened. Slaves were often put in less high positions, such as treasurer, generals, etc., but not as prime minister. This was done in Rome, China, Persia, Turkey, and all Islamic countries.

*-- Gen. 41:43-44 What other sign did Pharaoh give that showed he meant what he'd said about Joseph? ** he had Joseph ride in the second chariot, and everyone was to bow to Joseph

=== This "second chariot", I don't know if it means Pharaoh's second finest chariot or means that Joseph rode in the chariot right behind Pharaoh's own chariot, second in place. But whichever, it was a very high honor.

=== My Bible customs book says that the streets were so narrow that whenever a chariot was coming through, they had someone run ahead of the chariot warning people to get out of way.

But in this case, the people were not only to make way, they were to kneel as well, as they would do in the case of Pharaoh himself.

--- How complete was Joseph's rule to be? ** no one was to move without Joseph's permission

=== Now that wasn't literally true, of course. It just meant that Joseph had absolute rule. We might have said that no one could breathe without his permission.

*-- Gen. 41:45 "Joseph" is a Hebrew name; what did Pharaoh do about that? ** gave him the Egyptian name of Zaphnath-paaneah

--- Do you have a footnote that says what this means? ** some say "revealer of secrets"

--- And then how did Pharaoh provide for his new prime minister's comfort? ** gave him a wife

--- What was her name? ** Asenath

=== A good piece of Bible trivia!

--- Was Asenath just another slave? ** no, she was the daughter of a priest of On

=== Some translations say "prince of On". However, in the Bible the Hebrew word is translated as "priest" 725 times, "chief ruler" twice, "prince" once, and "principal officer" once. So I think we are safe in saying that he was a priest. But, remember, the priests were in the highest class of society.

=== "On" was the same "Heliopolis" which was a very important city at that time in the Delta of the Nile. It had a big, important temple to the sun god. Its priest was an important person, so Joseph was given a wife from the highest class.

=== Some people think that her father (Potipherah) was actually Potiphar, Joseph's former master. I don't think so, but it is an interesting thought. I probably wouldn't even have mentioned it except that the thought keeps niggling at my husband!

*-- Gen. 41:46 Did Joseph just stay in the capitol city and operate things? ** no, he went all over Egypt

--- Why would he have done that? ** he's now in charge of the country, and he needs to know all about it

=== Now we come to one of those "little" details that helps us pinpoint when various things happened.

--- How old was Joseph at this time? ** 30

=== We use this and a couple of other verses that will come up in a few chapters to determine how old Jacob was when he went to Haran and when his children were born. And, though these aren't of themselves important, they do help us get a more accurate picture of the Biblical events.

--- How old was Joseph when he told his father about the concubines' sons' misbehavior and when it is around the time that he was sold (37:2)? ** about 17

--- So about how many years did it take for this boy who was sold by his brothers to become the ruler of Egypt? ** 13 or less, depending on how long it was between the time he reported his brothers' misbehavior and when he was sold as a slave

*-- Gen. 41:47-49 Did seven years of good harvest really come as Joseph had prophesied? ** yes

--- What did Joseph do then? ** stored all of the extra food

--- How did he do this? ** evidently he made storehouses in most of the cities and then collected the extra grain (1/5 of the crops) from the surrounding fields and stored it in the city that the fields surrounded

--- How much grain was there? ** we don't know, because there was so much that Joseph finally stopped counting

--- To what does v. 49 compare the amount of grain that was collected? ** to the sand of the sea

*-- Gen. 41:50-52 What other good thing happened to Joseph? ** he had 2 sons

--- So do we need to wonder if Joseph had been made into a eunuch? ** no!

--- When were these sons born? ** during the 7 years of plenty

--- What were their names? ** (1) Manasseh and (2) Ephraim

=== And here we get a glimpse into how Joseph was feeling.

--- Do you have a footnote that says what "Manasseh" means? ** "causing to forget"

--- Why did Joseph name his firstborn "forgetting?" ** because God had made him to forget all of his earlier hard work and his old home with his father

=== I don't think that means he actually forgot his father, but just that he wasn't homesick anymore.

--- And do you have a footnote that says what "Ephraim" means? ** "double fruitful"

--- Why did he name his second son "fruitful?" ** because Joseph had done very well in the land where he was a slave

=== And he had had two sons now; double the "fruit of his loins."

*-- Gen. 41:53-54 There have been 7 years of abundant crops just as Joseph said; now what happened? ** the prophesied famine came

--- Where was the famine? ** "all lands", not just in Egypt

--- We have heard about famines before; where were they? ** in the land of Canaan during Abraham and Isaac's times.

=== There were often local famines. Remember the famines in Abraham's and Isaac's time that took them to Egypt and Philistia respectively. However, it really had to have been a bad time to cause a famine in Egypt. But if the famine had just been in Egypt, Jacob wouldn't have taken his family down into Egypt!

--- If there was this wide spread famine, what can we say about the weather conditions over a large part of the known world? ** that there was drought, no rain, for a long time

=== So not only would there not be rain in the southern mountainous areas of Africa where the Nile River got its water, but the land of Canaan and perhaps other areas didn't get rain as well.

--- But now during this so-to-speak "worldwide" famine, where is the one place where food can be found? ** in Egypt

--- Why there? ** because God had told Joseph about the coming famine when He gave him the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams, and they prepared for the future

*-- Gen. 41:55-57 What did the Egyptians do when they started getting hungry? ** appealed to the king

--- What did the king do about it? ** sent the people to Joseph

--- Who set the prices of the stored grain? ** Joseph

--- How did Joseph help the people? ** he opened the store houses

--- Did he just give the hungry people food? ** no, he sold food to them

--- Were the Egyptians the only ones he sold grain to? ** no, to "all countries"

--- Who does it sound like took personal charge of this selling of grain? ** it sounds as if Joseph did

=== We'll hear more about that in the next chapter.

=== But I had a thought as I was looking at this. I wonder if the dream and its interpretation were widely known. Did people in general know that there would be 7 years of great plenty followed by 7 years of famine? If they did know (and we aren't told they did), I wonder why they didn't store up food for themselves for the coming famine. Or did they just think that Pharaoh was simply raising taxes for some reason? We have no way of knowing, though.

CHART

REVIEW:

-- Where does this chapter find Joseph as it begins? ** as a slave in prison
-- Where does this chapter find Joseph as it ends? ** as the prime minister of Egypt, second only to the king himself
-- What one thing was responsible for bringing Joseph from prison to almost the throne of Egypt? ** interpreting Pharaoh's dream
-- Do you think this would have happened if the head butler had remembered to mention Joseph's predicament to Pharaoh as soon as the butler had gotten out of prison? ** no! there would have been nothing out of the ordinary (such as a worrisome dream) to call Joseph to the attention of Pharaoh, and who knows if they could even have found Joseph if he'd been released from prison a year or so earlier.
-- What were the dreams and shy were they important? ** about fat cows and grain being eaten up by skinny cows and grain, showing 7 years of plenty that is "eaten up" by 7 years of famine.
-- What happened to Joseph after interpreting the king's dreams? ** he was made the virtual ruler of Egypt, given a wife, toured Egypt, and had 2 sons.

APPLICATION:

** God rewards faithfulness (though not always in such great ways as being made prime minister!).
** We should prepare for hard times in the future.
** God works "in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform". In other words, we don't always understand what God is doing or why, but He has His good reasons.
** If God says something will happen, it will. God's prophesies always come true.
** We should save!
** Everything is for the glory of God.
** We shouldn't be bitter when things have gone badly for us.
** We should be humble.
** Tough times may prepare us for better times.
** We may not see the benefit of what's happening to us until we get to heaven.

Chapter 42: Joseph's brothers' 1st trip to Egypt

=== Being human, I love these next chapters! Joseph is now the Prime Minister of Egypt. He is married to Asenath and has 2 sons.

-- What are their names? ** Ephraim and Manasseh

=== The seven years of plenty have come and gone, and now the famine has hit Egypt and the surrounding countries. The only place to find food is in the storehouses of Egypt.

*-- Gen. 42:1-2 The story shifts now; who enters the picture? ** Jacob and his other sons

--- How long since we last heard of them? ** about 20 years (30 [41:46] - 17 [37:2] = 13 + 7 years of plenty = 20 + a year or so of famine)

--- Where do they live? ** in Canaan

--- What condition existed in Canaan? ** famine

--- What had Jacob heard about? ** that there was grain in Egypt

=== The KJ says there was "corn" in Egypt. That wouldn't be our maize or corn on the cob. It simply means "grain."

--- How did Jacob propose to get this grain? ** by sending his sons to Egypt to buy some

--- I find Jacob's question to them interesting; what did he ask them in v. 1? ** why they were just looking at each other

=== But let's not speculate on this -- as much as I'd like to!

*-- Gen. 42:3-4 How many of Joseph's brothers were sent to Egypt to buy grain? ** 10

--- How many more brothers did Joseph have? ** 1, Benjamin

--- Why hadn't Benjamin gone also? ** Jacob kept him home because he was afraid some harm might come to him

=== Though the KJ translates this as "mischief", the word is actually "harm" as the NAS has it.

--- What was special about Benjamin? ** he was the only remaining son of the beloved Rachel

--- Who was Benjamin's only full brother? ** the supposedly dead Joseph

*-- Gen. 42:5-6 Were Jacob's sons the only ones who went to Egypt to buy grain? ** no, they were only "among those who came"

--- What connection, unknown to their father Jacob, did the 10 brothers have with Egypt? ** that is where they had sold their brother Joseph to be sent as a slave

=== And here I think we might allow ourselves to speculate a little! I wonder if the brothers thought of Joseph as they were sent to Egypt. And as they entered Egypt I wonder if they were wondering if Joseph were still alive, and if so, if they would run into him. I wonder if they were eyeing slaves of the proper age! But we aren't told any of this at all.

--- Who was in charge of the selling of the grain? ** Joseph

=== If Joseph did the selling, it sounds to me as if they only sold grain at one place at a time. That way not only would Joseph know there was no abuse of the system, but he would also see everyone who came to buy. Was he looking for his brothers? Again, we aren't told.

--- But, though we aren't told, would he have any reason to expect them to come to Egypt? ** yes

--- Why? ** because by now people from Canaan would have been coming to Egypt for grain, and he would have known that the famine wasn't just confined to Egypt, so his brothers would have to come buy from him

=== But again, we aren't told what Joseph was thinking. Also, he may have been getting reports of how crops had been and if there were famine in other places besides Egypt. He seems a very on-top-or-it sort of man.

--- So who did Jacob's sons go to in order to buy grain? ** their brother Joseph

--- How did a person approach the governor of Egypt? ** by bowing to the ground

--- So how did the 10 brothers approach this foreign governor? ** by prostrating themselves before him

=== Now let's just remember something from an earlier chapter.

--- What had been Joseph's first dream that he'd told his brothers about (37:7)? ** that they were all binding sheaves in the field and his own sheaf stood up, and the brother's sheaves bowed to his sheaf

--- Would this here in ch. 42 be a fulfillment of that dream/prophecy? ** perhaps

--- Why do I say "perhaps?" ** the answer would be "yes" if in the dream there were only 10 sheaves bowing to Joseph's sheaf, but the answer would be "no" if there had been 11 sheaves bowing

=== But we weren't given the number of sheaves that bowed to Joseph's sheaf, so we need to be careful.

--- Interestingly, what is contained within a sheaf? ** grain!

=== Which, of course, is what they are there in Egypt to buy. Very fitting!

*-- Gen. 42:7-8 Who recognized whom? ** Joseph recognized his brothers

--- But did Joseph then immediately make himself known to his brothers? ** no

--- Was it an accident on Joseph's part that they didn't recognize him? ** no, it says he purposely "disguised" himself

--- How did he speak to them? ** harshly, roughly

=== We'll find out a little later that he was also using an interpreter, which would be a further disguise.

--- What does Joseph ask them? ** where they're from

--- And what is their answer? ** that they're from Canaan

--- What additional information do they volunteer? ** that they've come to buy food

--- Did the 10 brothers recognize Joseph? ** no

--- Why might they not have recognized their own brother and yet he recognized them? ** again, my guess is that he probably figured that eventually they would have to come down to Egypt to buy food and was keeping a lookout for them. Also, they were grown men in their very late teens or early twenties when he left, probably with at least the beginning of beards, so they probably hadn't changed too much. So he was probably just looking for somewhat older versions of the brothers he knew. Also, he would know to look over any Hebrews carefully. On the other hand, the brothers may well have figured that Joseph was dead from the hard life of slavery. If they were looking for him at all, they would be looking for a wretched Hebrew slave, not a high class, shaven Egyptian who apparently spoke no Hebrew (as we just said, it mentions later that Joseph spoke to them through an interpreter)!

*-- Gen. 42:9-11 Picture Joseph as ruler of Egypt and his brothers approaching and bowing to him; what did this bring to Joseph's mind? ** his dreams

=== I wonder if Joseph had wondered when he was in Potiphar's house and in jail how the dreams could possibly come true! Yet in the case of the chief baker and butler and of Pharaoh he seems to have had confidence that he could properly interpret dreams with the help of the Lord.

--- How does Joseph greet his brothers? ** he accuses them of being spies

=== The KJ says they've come to spy out the nakedness of the land; the NAS and NIV indicate that they have come to spy out where defenses are lacking. However, the word in Hebrew seems to indicate actual nakedness, something shameful or indecent, often having to do with sex. So I think that the KJ has it correct. I'm not sure what would be indecent or shameful that he charges that they are looking for. Perhaps it is to see the terrible lack of food and resulting wretchedness or perhaps the lack of defense. But we won't worry about just what they're accused of spying out. Just the fact that they're accused of being spies is enough to cause them worry!

--- At any rate, do they just ignore this charge? ** no, they deny it

--- Again, what do they say is the reason they are there? ** to buy food

--- Who do they tell him that they are? ** all the sons of one man

--- And what kind of men do they say they are? ** honest, true men

--- We aren't told, but why might Joseph not have made himself known to his brothers right away? ** I don't think it is vengeance on his part (though perhaps there was a little of that there, also!) but by waiting he will be able to really find out how they feel about him, that is, if they still hate him or have repented, etc.; can they be trusted now

=== Also, there may possibly be another reason that we've already touched on but will bring up more in a minute.

*-- Gen. 42:12-13 How does Joseph seem to respond to their denial of being spies? ** he feigns disbelief

--- What do the brothers finally tell Joseph about themselves and their family? ** that they are all brothers and that one is dead and that the youngest brother is at home with their father

=== Now let's skip ahead for just a minute to get more of the whole picture.

*-- Gen. 43:7 Here the brothers are explaining to their father Jacob what had happened.

--- Did the brothers just volunteer the information about their brother Benjamin and their father Jacob? ** no, Joseph had specifically asked them

=== So they hadn't just blurted out their life histories on their own. And very likely they had been questioned separately. Interrogation is done that way to prevent people from collaborating and "getting their stories straight". OK, back to Chapter 42.

*-- Gen. 42:14-17 Did Joseph then tell his brothers who he really was? ** no, he pretends to disbelieve his brothers

--- What proof of their innocence does he demand? ** that in order to see if they really have a younger brother, Benjamin must be brought to him

--- How does he propose to make them bring Benjamin? ** by keeping 9 of them in prison and sending one back to get their youngest brother

--- How long did they have to think about his plan? ** 3 days

--- Where were they while they thought about it? ** in jail

=== Now again let's do some thinking here. We aren't told Joseph's reasoning, but is Joseph just being a little mean and wrecking a little vengeance on them out of human spite? Why wouldn't he immediately tell them who he is and then relieve the sorrow of his father?

--- Can you think of any reason except "to get his own" that he might have done this? ** (1) he may wonder if he could trust them if he were to bring them to live in Egypt and is testing them to see if they have changed; after all he wouldn't want to bring some enemies down there, or even (2) remember that back when he had his youthful dreams, the first one had been that his brothers' sheaves bowed to his; as we said earlier, it gives no number of how many sheaves bowed to his; might it perhaps have been 11, and he now realized that in order for that to be fulfilled first (before the sun, representing his father, bowed to him) that Benjamin would also have to be there?

=== We aren't told, but I think we might give Joseph the benefit of the doubt and figure he may have had a good reason for this, not just spite.

*-- Gen. 42:18-20 How long does Joseph really keep them in prison? ** for 3 days, just as he

said

--- Then how does Joseph alter his original plan after letting them cool their heels in jail for 3 days? ** he says that he'll only keep one of them in jail and send the rest back for their youngest brother

--- What excuse does he give for this change of his plans? ** that he fears God

--- Would they have to come back immediately? ** no

--- Why not? ** because Joseph is going to give them grain to take back home to their families

--- What does Joseph say will happen to them if they come back and bring Benjamin with them? ** they wouldn't die

=== Now, I can see 2 ways that could be taken.

--- What might Joseph have meant by saying they wouldn't die if they brought their youngest brother with them? ** it may be he just meant that they would have starved to death because he wouldn't have sold them any more food; however, he says that by bringing back their youngest brother it would be proof that they weren't spies

--- And what is the regular punishment for spies? ** execution

--- With this threat before them and knowing how their father felt about Benjamin, what precaution did Joseph take to make sure that they would actually return to Egypt? ** he was going to keep one of them in jail until they got back to Egypt

*-- Gen. 42:21 Can the brothers see any reason at all for this terrible turn of events? ** yes

--- What reason? ** they see it as their just desserts for their treatment of Joseph so long ago

--- Had the young Joseph just calmly gone along with their plans so many years ago? ** no

--- What had he evidently done then? ** begged them not to do those things to him

--- So does it sound as if they had just put their dealings with Joseph out of their minds after about 20 years? ** no

--- Would you say they sound repentant? ** to me they do

*-- Gen. 24:22 Who says, "I told you so"? ** Reuben

--- What part had Reuben played in the dealings with Joseph? ** he had been the one who had originally suggested putting him in the pit instead of killing him out of hand and had planned on rescuing Joseph later

--- What does it sound as if perhaps Reuben had done before suggesting putting Joseph in the pit, v. 22? ** it sound as if perhaps he'd tried to talk them out of hurting Joseph at all, and when they wouldn't listen to him then he'd suggested the pit

=== But I don't think that idea is for sure.

--- Reuben said, "Therefore is Joseph's blood required"; where would he have gotten such an idea? ** after the flood when God told Noah and his family (all of mankind at the time) that murderers must be killed

--- But they hadn't actually murdered Joseph, so why does Reuben say this about Joseph's blood? ** because the life of a slave could be very short

=== At the very least, the other 9 brothers had condemned Joseph to what they thought was a life of misery.

*-- Gen. 42:23-24 Why did the brothers speak so freely among themselves in front of this governor? ** they didn't know that he understood them

--- Why would they think he didn't understand them? ** because he used an interpreter

=== We aren't told what the interpreter thought about this. Perhaps he just ignored anything that didn't have to be translated, or perhaps it was so vague it meant nothing to him, or perhaps he just didn't care what these foreigners were talking about among themselves. We are told, so we need to be careful.

--- How did their confession of guilt affect Joseph? ** it made him cry

--- Did they think it strange that this governor was crying? ** no

--- Why not? ** they didn't know it because he hid it from them by turning away from them

=== It sounds as if perhaps he may actually have gone into another room.

--- But does Joseph still go on with his plan? ** yes

--- Which brother does he choose to keep in prison? ** Simeon

--- How did Joseph impress them with the reality of his plan? ** he had Simeon tied up as they watched, then released 9 of them (keeping Simeon in jail) to go back home with food

=== I've wondered why Simeon was the one Joseph chose to keep in prison. I've thought of a couple of possible reasons.

--- What reasons might there have been for this choice of Simeon? **

=== I think the most likely reason is that Simeon was the second oldest of the brothers. Perhaps Joseph, being a prophet, later knew that Reuben would have rescued him. At any rate, Joseph may well have figured that Simeon should have stopped any mistreatment of Joseph if Reuben didn't. Also, since Reuben was gone when the slavers came by, that would have put Simeon officially in charge, and he should have stopped the others from selling Joseph. There is also the possibility that since we know that Simeon was considered cruel from what Jacob later says (he was one of the 2 brothers who avenged Dinah by wiping out the town), I've wondered if the idea of killing him in the first place was Simeon's idea. But we really don't know. And remember that Joseph was a prophet, and he would have his reasons. I really don't think this was all for vengeance.

*-- Gen. 42:25-26 So is Joseph actually going to let the other 9 brothers leave? ** yes

--- Does he really have any guarantee that they will come back again with Benjamin? ** yes and no

--- Why "yes" ** (1) because of his dreams as a young man, (2) if they are able to bring Benjamin with them they would probably come back and get Simeon again, and (3) because they are going to run out of food before the famine is over

--- But why "no"? ** if they are afraid to come back even though Simeon is in prison there, then they might just make up a lie about Simeon to their father as they had done about Joseph's disappearance and try to get some sort of food elsewhere

=== Then Joseph had 3 things done for them.

--- What is the first thing that Joseph had done? ** gave them grain to take home for their families

--- What was the second thing? ** had their money put back in their sacks

--- And the third thing? ** gave them food for their return trip

=== It sounds to me that the return trip food was probably in separate smaller bags.

--- This may have been the way they did for everyone, but why might he have had the food for the return trip separately anyway? ** (1) it may possibly have been something other than just raw grain, and that way they wouldn't have to stop and cook it, and (2) they wouldn't be opening the bags of grain until later, so they wouldn't immediately see the returned money

--- How were they able to carry all of that grain? ** they had donkeys with them

=== We aren't told whether each man had one donkey or if they each have more than one, are we?

--- Now, we aren't told why Joseph put the money back in their sacks; but can you think of any reason for this? ** it seems to me that he's still trying to find out just what kind of men they are; he was going to test their honesty

=== If they eventually came back with Benjamin because of the famine, will they conveniently have "forgotten" about the returned money or just pretend it hadn't happened, figuring it was an accident? Or will they bring the money back with them and give it to him, chancing his anger? He knew his father was rich in herds, so I doubt if he thought they needed the money.

=== By the way, notice that it talks about money. We tend to think of barter for the ancients, but there was a good means of monetary exchange at that time. Remember, also, that some years earlier the Midianite merchants had given the brothers pieces of silver in exchange for Joseph as a slave.

*-- Gen. 42:27-28 When was some of the money first found? ** probably that evening, but at any rate when they stopped for the night

--- Were they just going to camp out in the fields? ** no, there was an inn

=== Another glimpse of life then.

--- And how was some of the returned money first found? ** one of them went to feed his donkey and saw it

=== My guess is that they would feed the donkeys all from one sack.

--- Did he keep this news (or money) to himself? ** no, he told his brothers

--- What reaction was there when he told his brothers about the found money? ** they were very scared

--- We aren't told, but why might they be scared? ** the governor of Egypt might miss the money and think they had stolen it and then he wouldn't believe anything they said

--- Who do they seem to hold responsible for the returned money? ** God

*-- Gen. 42:29-35 So did they get back home again with the grain? ** yes

--- Who did the brothers give a report to? ** their father Jacob

--- How detailed a report was it? ** they told him everything

=== We won't ask questions on v. 30-34 except for just 3 questions about v. 34, since it is just a repetition of what we read earlier.

--- If they were to bring Benjamin back to Egypt with them, what would this prove to the stern governor? ** that they weren't spies

--- Would they get Simeon back? ** yes

--- And what other good would come of it? ** they could freely come and buy grain there as they needed it

--- As they unloaded their donkeys and started putting the grain away, what new cause for dismay occurs? ** the other 8 find their money in their sacks of grain also

--- Again, what reaction? ** fear

--- Was it just the brothers who were afraid? ** no, their father Jacob was also

*-- Gen. 42:36 Does it sound as if Jacob might have suspected something about Joseph's "death"? ** perhaps; he says that they had "bereaved" him of his children

--- Which children? ** Joseph and Simeon

--- Does it sound as if he had a lot of hope of getting Simeon back and then that everything would be all right? ** no, it seems to me that he speaks of Simeon as if he were as good as dead

--- But he seems to think it would be all right for Benjamin to go back with them, doesn't he? ** no, he speaks of him in the same sentence as Joseph and Simeon

*-- Gen. 42:37 How does Reuben try to calm his father? ** he offers his own 2 sons as surety that he will bring Benjamin back

--- But what about Reuben's sons if Reuben weren't to bring Benjamin back safely? ** Jacob could kill them!

--- Does this desperate offer of Reuben seem like a good idea to you? ** no!

=== The Berkeley translation has a note: "Two more deaths in the family would hardly serve to appease Jacob"!!

*-- Gen. 37:38 Does Reuben's plan have the desired effect of calming Jacob? ** no, Jacob just ignores him and lays down the law that Benjamin won't go

--- What is the first thing that Jacob says in his refusal to let Benjamin go? ** because his brother is dead and he's the only one left

--- What does he mean by that? ** Joseph and Benjamin were full brothers through the beloved Rachel, and that Benjamin is the only child of hers who is left to him

--- After saying that, then what does it seem is the reason that Jacob doesn't want Benjamin to go? ** because something might happen to him on the trip

--- And what does Jacob say would happen if Benjamin went and something did happened to him? ** that it would kill Jacob

--- Do we have any indication that Jacob went into great mourning over the failure of Simeon to come back? ** no

--- But does that mean Jacob didn't mourn Simeon? ** no

=== But in these first moments of discussing the problem, in light of the famine, it seems to me that Jacob is putting Benjamin ahead of all the rest of the remaining 9 brothers combined or at least ahead of Simeon. Because if the famine were to let up before their food ran out, if doesn't sound as if he planned to get Simeon back. And he may have figured that Simeon would just die from mistreatment in the prison. But we really don't know this, so we need to be careful.

REVIEW:

-- Why did Joseph's brothers go into Egypt in the first place? ** to buy grain because there was famine

-- Did any sort of recognition take place? ** yes, Joseph recognized his brothers

-- How did Joseph treat them? ** as if they were spies and put them all in jail for 3 days

-- What did he do after 3 days? ** let 9 of them loose, tied up Simeon and put him in jail, then gave them grain

-- What did Joseph have done that scared the brothers after they had left? ** had their money put back in each sack

-- What was Jacob's reaction to all of this? ** fear and refusal to let Benjamin go with them

APPLICATIONS:

** When someone has done wrong, it is good to check out his attitude before trusting him.

** If we have lied, it will probably come out some day.

** We should be trustworthy so that we can be trusted in the future.

** We shouldn't show favoritism among out children.

Chapter 43: Joseph's brothers' 2nd trip to Egypt

=== We are looking at the life of Joseph. After being sold by his brothers as a slave bound for Egypt, he's had some ups and downs.

-- What is his position in Egypt now? ** he's prime minister, second in importance in Egypt just after the Pharaoh himself

-- How did he get to this exalted position? ** by being able to interpret the king's dream about the 7 years of plenty followed by the 7 years of famine and then giving the king advice about what to do about it

-- What is he doing at this time in the story? ** selling the stored grain

-- In the process of doing this, whom did he meet in the last chapter? ** 10 of his brothers

-- Were they happy to see him? ** they didn't recognize him!

-- How did he treat them? ** accused them of being spies

-- Did he finally sell them grain, though? ** yes

-- And how did it all end up? ** with Simeon in prison until they would come back with Benjamin

-- And what shock did they receive as they unloaded their sacks of grain at home? ** all of their money had been returned to them

-- What does Jacob have to say about their going back with Benjamin? ** he absolutely refuses

-- Who had an unsatisfactory solution to the Benjamin problem and what was it? ** Reuben offered to have his 2 sons killed if he didn't bring Benjamin back safely!

=== So let's go on now.

*-- Gen. 43:1-2 How did conditions go? ** the famine continued

--- What happened to the grain they'd bought in Egypt? ** they ate it all up

--- What then? ** Jacob wanted them to go back to Egypt and get more

*-- Gen. 43:3-5 Who was spokesman for the brothers? ** Judah

--- What did Judah tell their father? ** about how they couldn't go back to Egypt without Benjamin

=== They'd told Jacob this when they first returned to Canaan, and this is just a reminder.

--- So under what condition would they be willing to return to Egypt? ** only if Benjamin were with them

--- Besides to buy more grain, what other incentive would they have for going to Egypt? ** Simeon was in prison there

*-- Gen. 43:6-7 Now what does Jacob reprove his sons for? ** the fact that they'd told the governor of Egypt that they had another brother

--- Well, why had they? ** because he had come right out and asked them

--- What specifically had this governor asked them? ** if their father were still alive and if they had another brother

--- Now, as a prophet, should Joseph have known the answers to these questions? ** yes

--- Why? ** because of his dream about the sun, moon, and 11 stars bowing to him

=== So if he knew those were actual prophecies, he would have known that they were still alive. But we aren't told just what Joseph knew about the dreams. But that was a pretty good way of checking up on how his father and Benjamin were!

*-- Gen. 43:8-9 Now, again, when they'd first come home and told the conditions of being able to return to Egypt, what surety had Reuben offered for Benjamin's safe return? ** the lives of his own 2 sons

--- How had Jacob reacted to that? ** refused to send Benjamin

--- Now who offers a surety for Benjamin's safe return if he were to go with them? ** Judah

--- What was that surety? ** simply his word and that he'd take the blame forever if he didn't bring Benjamin back safely to their father

--- What does Judah intimate will happen if they don't go, v. 8? ** they will all, adults and children, die

--- Of what would they die? ** starvation

--- By the way, what did Judah call Benjamin? ** "the lad"

=== Pictures show Benjamin as being about 10 years old; but how old would Benjamin really have been? I could just tell you, but I think you'll get more out of it if you figure it out for yourselves!

--- When was Joseph born in relation to the family's return from Haran, 30:25; 31:28? ** about 6 years before, because Jacob worked 14 years for the wives and then 6 more years for the flocks, and Joseph was born before the working for the flocks

--- After what terrible event in ch. 34 was Benjamin born? ** after the slaughter of Shechem by Simeon and Levi

--- Was this before or after Jacob left Haran? ** quite a bit after

--- So at least how many years was there between the births of Rachel's two sons, 35:16? ** over 6, perhaps 8 or 9

--- Now, how old was Joseph when he was taken out of prison and stood before Pharaoh, 41:46? ** 30

--- How many years of plenty had there been by this time in our chapter today? ** 7 years

--- Glancing ahead at 45:6, how many years of famine had there been? ** 2

--- So at least how old would Joseph be at the time of this second journey? ** 39 (30+7+2)

--- And that would make "the lad" Benjamin about how old? ** I'd say at least 30, perhaps a little older!

=== Now that wasn't so hard, was it?! Just little things picked out here and there can help us get a better picture of what is going on.

=== So let's just say that Benjamin was about 30 years old at this time when they are speaking of "the lad"! And we're going to find out in a couple of chapters that Benjamin has 10 sons! So he wasn't just some child as the Sunday School pictures usually show! But he is the youngest child by several years.

--- And what was so special about Benjamin? ** he was the only remaining child of the beloved Rachel

*-- Gen. 43:10 Then what did Judah say about the delay that had gone on with not wanting to send Benjamin down with them? ** that they could have made two trips by now if he had been with them

=== It seems to me that this probably means a total of two trips, not two trips since they had come back the first time. But I'm not sure.

--- How long had it been since their previous trip? ** we don't really know, but at least long enough to have eaten up all of the food they'd brought and to have made another round trip to Egypt

=== A round trip would be about 400 miles. A good pace would be 20 miles a day. So a round trip to Egypt would take a good month.

*-- Gen. 43:11-14 Did Jacob finally decide to let Benjamin go? ** yes

--- Why? ** they would all starve to death otherwise

--- What plan did Jacob come up with? ** for them to take the governor a present, plus money to buy more grain, and the money they'd found in their bags before and give all of this to the governor

--- What did he hope had been the reason for the returned money? ** that it was just a mistake

--- But then why not just ignore the returned money? ** they probably figured the governor may have missed it when bookkeeping

=== And in their situation they probably figured they'd better be completely honest!

-- What kind of present did they send? ** balm, honey, spices, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds

=== The KJ just says "nuts", but according to Strong's, the NAS and NIV correctly say "pistachio nuts."

=== Even though there was a famine in Canaan, they could still come up with these things for a gift. Those nuts and honey wouldn't have been enough to keep them from starving to death, but it must have been quite a sacrifice.

--- What did Jacob want, v. 14? ** mercy from God so his sons could all come back

--- So who is he thinking of here in particular? ** Simeon as well as Benjamin

=== Now a little thing I found interesting but couldn't find a solution to.

--- What was Jacob called in v. 8 and 11? ** Israel

--- How about in 42:5? ** Israel

--- But what is he called in 42:1? ** Jacob

--- And 42:29? ** Jacob

--- Of course, why is Jacob sometimes called Israel? ** because that is the name that the Lord gave him after the wrestling match

=== It's the same in ch. 37. He's called by both names in that chapter, too. I've been trying to find a pattern as to when he's called Jacob and when he's called Israel. I checked the concordance on this, too. But I can't find a pattern. So I think that maybe he's just interchangeably called those two names without any real reason.

*-- Gen. 43:15-16 So what did they take with them as they went down into Egypt this second time? ** money to buy grain, the money that'd been returned, the present, and Benjamin

--- And to whom did they go? ** Joseph

--- What was the first thing that it mentions that Joseph saw with the older brothers? ** Benjamin

=== Remember that Joseph hasn't seen his full brother, Benjamin, since Benjamin was about 9 or 10 years old, for about 20 years.

--- Did now Joseph make himself known right away to his brothers? ** no

--- Where did Joseph tell his steward to take them? ** to his home

--- And then what was his steward to do? ** kill an animal and fix a meal

--- Why? ** because they were going to eat a midday meal with him

=== This steward was probably in the position to Joseph that Joseph had been to Potiphar.

=== My Bible customs book says that the ancient Egyptian monuments show pictures of shops for selling chickens, but none for selling regular "red" meat. However, it went on to say that there were many depictions of animals being killed in the courtyards of private houses. It was thought that perhaps this type of meat was only used on special occasions. But the animal would be killed and cut right up into smaller pieces, so a meal could quickly be made.

*-- Gen. 43:17-19 Did Joseph's steward do as Joseph had told him? ** yes

--- And then what reaction did Joseph's brothers have to being taken to the governor's house? ** fear

--- Why? ** they were afraid that Joseph was going to take them as slaves

--- Interestingly, what else did they figure Joseph was going to take? ** their donkeys

--- What excuse did they think Joseph would use for enslaving them? ** the money that had turned up in their bags

--- Who do they approach concerning their fears? ** Joseph's steward

--- Where do they talk to this steward? ** by the door

=== I can't help but wonder why that little detail was included here. It sounds here as if they are already in the house, though later it sounds as if this just happened as he was going to bring them into the house, that they spoke to him before actually entering.

*-- Gen. 43:20-23 What did the brothers talk to Joseph's steward about? ** they told them about the money that they'd found in their sacks and didn't know how it got there and how they had brought it all back

--- Who did the steward say was responsible for the money they'd found in their sacks? ** their God and the God of their father

=== Which makes me wonder if the steward were in on what was going on. Though I doubt if he knew the reason. He may just have figured that this mighty governor had whims! More details that the Bible doesn't give us!

--- Then what amazing news did the steward give them? ** he said that he had their money from the first purchase

--- What else reassured the men, end of v. 23? ** Simeon was brought out to them alive and well

*-- Gen. 43:24-25 Now where do we know for sure that they are? ** inside Joseph's house

--- How were they all treated when they got to Joseph's house? ** they were given water with which to wash their feet and were given food for their donkeys

--- What did they do after washing their feet? ** they got their present all ready to give to Joseph and then waited

--- What did they hear was in store for them? ** to eat the midday meal there at the prime minister's house

=== This would really be overawing! Remember, they lived in tents, though they may have had fancy tents and beautiful things in their tents. But Joseph would have had a grand house, and, let's face it, he was the prime minister!

*-- Gen. 43:26-28 What did they do when Joseph got home for lunch? ** they bowed to the ground and gave him their present

--- What prophecy did this fulfill (if it hadn't already been fulfilled on the earlier visit)? ** the dream about the brothers' sheaves bowing to Joseph's sheaf

=== But, remember, we weren't told how many sheaves were involved in this dream.

--- Did Joseph just ignore these "foreigners" and sit down to eat? ** no

--- What did he do? ** asked how they were and about their father

--- Then after answering, what did the brothers do again? ** bowed to Joseph

=== And remember, these weren't just bow-from-the-waist bows. They were get-down-on-the-ground bows.

*-- Gen. 43:29-30 Then, again, who does Joseph see? ** his younger brother Benjamin

--- What did he ask the other brothers? ** if that were their younger brother that they'd spoken of

--- Did Joseph just ignore Benjamin then? ** no, he spoke to him kindly

=== I had thought this might be a blessing that he pronounced on Benjamin, but my Bible customs book said that it was just one of the many polite ways used when you met or left someone you knew.

--- How did Joseph react to seeing Benjamin? ** he went to his room and cried

--- Why was he so attached to Benjamin? ** that was his only full brother, and also was a brother who hadn't been mean to him, as well as being his "baby brother", at least 6 years younger than himself

*-- Gen. 43:31-32 After getting his emotions under control, what did Joseph do, v. 31? ** went back and told the servants to put the food on the table

--- What do we know at least part of this food to be? ** meat from the slaying mentioned earlier

=== I found it interesting that both Strong's and my Bible customs book said that though this word for "food" or "bread" can mean simply food, that usually it means just "bread." My book said that bread was the main food in the ancient world. Some people think that about 75% of all the people lived entirely on bread. So the word became just a general word for all food. But we also know that at least at this meal, they also had meat.

--- How many seating arrangements were there? ** 3

--- What were they? ** Joseph sat by himself at one table, then there was a table for the Egyptians who were there, then Joseph's brothers were in another group

--- Why were there 3 tables? ** Joseph ate by himself probably because of his rank, though it could have been because he wasn't an Egyptian; then the Egyptians wouldn't eat with any foreigner, since they considered them unclean, so the Hebrews (Joseph's brothers) had a table to themselves

=== I've read that the Egyptians wouldn't even use the eating utensils of a foreigner or eat a clean animal that had been cut up by a non-Egyptian's knife. This was because foreigners killed and ate animals that the Egyptians either regarded as unclean or sacred. For instance, they worshipped cows. So my guess would be that they weren't eating beef that day!

=== Just a bit to help us picture this in our minds a little better. The Egyptians actually sat up when they ate. They might either sit on cushions or low chairs or on the floor. My customs book says that reclining came in much later with the Persians.

*-- Gen. 43:33-34 What was the seating arrangement at Joseph's brothers' table? ** they were seated according to age

--- How did the brothers react to this? ** they were amazed

--- Why would they have been amazed? ** they must have wondered how Joseph knew their ages

=== At Egyptian dinners people were seated according to their rank. But they might well wonder how this man knew their ages. Especially since they were all so close in age except Benjamin!

--- How was the dinner served to the brothers? ** the different foods were put into various large serving dishes on Joseph's table, then he had food carried to them by a servant

--- Who got the most? ** Benjamin

--- How much more? ** his servings were 5 times as big as the others

=== This must have further amazed the brothers. In that society you showed a special guest special respect by sending him a choice piece or by giving him a bigger helping than the others. My Bible customs book says that a king was given a double portion -- and here Benjamin was getting 5 times as much! The others must have wondered why this preferential treatment to the youngest of the group, though they certainly wouldn't have complained!

--- Did the brothers just sit there, or did they eat their dinners? ** they ate and drank and evidently had a good time

REVIEW:

-- Why didn't the brothers go down into Egypt for food again soon? ** because they would have to take Benjamin with them, and Jacob didn't want them to

-- Who finally convinced Jacob to let Benjamin go? ** Judah

-- What did Jacob do in preparation for sending them to Egypt again? ** gave them double their money to take plus a gift of spices, honey, nuts, and balm

-- What did Joseph do when he saw them? ** had them taken to his house

-- What did the brothers think of that at first? ** they were scared because of the money that had been returned in their sacks

-- What did they do at Joseph's house? ** ate dinner

-- What about Simeon who had been in prison all of this time? ** he was brought out to them

-- What was Joseph's reaction when he saw Benjamin in his house? ** he had to leave the room in order to weep

-- What was unusual in their seating arrangement? ** they were seated oldest to youngest

-- Was any favoritism shown to Benjamin? ** yes, he was given 5 times as much food as the others

APPLICATIONS:

** When we have wronged someone, we should make it up more than what we did to them wrong.

** Our families really are very important to us.

** We should protect our reputations so that just our word will count.

** We should forgive those who have wronged us.

** It may seem a long time to us, but God can "solve" our problems.

** God's prophecies always come true; so we can trust in that for the Second Coming, too.

Chapter 44: The Cup is in Benjamin's Sack

-- Who was having dinner with whom as chapter 43 closed? ** Joseph's brothers with Joseph

-- Did they know who Joseph was? ** no

-- How many brothers were eating with Joseph? ** all 11

*-- Gen. 44:1-2 After wining and dining his brothers, to whom did Joseph speak? ** to his steward, the man in charge of his house

--- What directions did Joseph give to his steward as the brothers prepared to leave? ** (1) give them as much food as they can carry, (2) put each man's money back in his bag, and (3) put Joseph's own silver cup into Benjamin's sack.

--- We aren't told, but why do you think that he had the cup put into Benjamin's sack? ** I think that he wanted an excuse to bring Benjamin back and then to see how the others would act -- would they just go on home without Benjamin, or would they try to defend him

=== This whole story is full of vivid mental pictures. Try to "see" it in your minds as we go along. What a TV show this would make!

*-- Gen. 44:3-5 Did the brothers get up and leave for home immediately after eating dinner with Joseph? ** no

--- When did the brothers leave? ** as soon as it was light in the morning

=== So they spent the night there in Egypt, didn't they? We aren't told where they slept, which I'd be curious to know!

--- How long did their peace of mind last? ** only until they'd gotten out of the city a short ways

--- What did Joseph tell his steward to do then? ** ride after the brothers and accuse them of the theft of the cup

--- Does is sound as if the steward could take his own sweet time doing this? ** no, it sounds as if he were to do it right away

--- What does Joseph say about the cup? ** that not only did he drink out of it, but it's the one he used to "divine" with

=== It sounds as if it were sort of like a crystal ball or tea leaves. We're not going to speculate on this, though. I think it is sufficient to say that it was Joseph's special belonging.

--- What was the steward to say that such a theft was? ** evil, returning evil for good

*-- Gen. 44:6-9 Does the steward do as Joseph said? ** yes

--- How do the brothers react to this accusation of theft? ** they vehemently deny it

--- What do they use as an example of their honesty? ** the fact that they brought back the money they had first found in their sacks

--- Were they sure of each other's honesty in this matter? ** yes

--- How do you know? ** they said that whoever had the cup would die and the rest of them would be Joseph's slaves

*-- Gen. 44:10-11 Did the steward go along with what they volunteered? ** no, he said that only the one who had the cup would be enslaved; the rest could go on home

--- Did the brothers waste any time in setting out to prove their innocence? ** no, they acted quickly

--- What action did they take? ** they quickly took their sacks down and opened them for inspection

=== Can't you just see them doing this?!

*-- Gen. 44:12 In what order did the steward search the bags? ** from the oldest to the youngest

=== I find it interesting that it says nothing about the money in the sacks. Maybe the money was buried under a layer or so of grain, I don't know.

--- Did the steward know (1) if the cup was there, and (2) if so in which bag? ** yes

--- How did he know? ** he'd put it in the bag of the youngest himself at Joseph's orders (v. 1-2)

=== He's keeping up the suspense, isn't he? You can almost feel the tension in the air. They know it isn't there, and he knows it is and strings them along!

--- Where was the governor's silver cup found? ** in Benjamin's sack

*-- Gen. 44:13-14 How did these men take this discovery? ** they all tore their clothes, loaded up their donkeys, and all together headed straight back to Joseph's house

=== It sounds like they didn't even stop to argue about it or discuss what to do. Just picture the scene and their state of mind!

--- Had Joseph gone back to work at the store houses by then? ** no, he was still at his house

--- How did the 11 brothers approach him? ** they threw themselves on the ground at his feet

--- By the way, who seems to be the leader of the group? ** Judah; it speaks of "Judah and his brethren"

--- But where does Judah come in the birth order? ** 4th

--- So why do you think that Judah is mentioned by name? ** he was the one who had made himself responsible for Benjamin's safety

*-- Gen. 44:15-17 Joseph asks them why they stole his cup; why does he present the theft to them as a stupid thing to have done? ** he asks them if they didn't know that he could use enchantments

=== If a person can use enchantments and read the future, it wouldn't be very bright to try to do something behind his back and then expect him not to know about it!

--- Who is spokesman for the group of brothers? ** Judah

--- Again, perhaps why was it Judah? ** he was the one who was responsible for Benjamin to their father; also he seems a natural born leader

--- Why does Judah seem to think this has all happened to them? ** because God has seen their wickedness

--- What might we infer him to mean by this? ** the selling of Joseph

--- What does Judah say they'll do as payment for the theft? ** all of them will be Joseph's slaves

--- Does Judah have to say this? ** no, the steward had just said that they'd keep Benjamin

--- It would have been easier just to have given Benjamin to the governor and then gone home with some story to explain his absence to their father; why don't they? ** Judah had given his word to his father.

--- Had Judah ever had any experience in his life whereby not keeping his word had caused trouble and embarrassment? ** yes, when he'd promised his youngest son to Tamar and then hadn't done it, etc.

--- Is Judah's proposition to the governor acceptable to the governor? ** no, the governor (Joseph) says the same as the steward, that they could go free and only leave Benjamin, the "thief", as a slave

--- Why might Joseph be prolonging their agony like this? ** I don't think it was for meanness; I think Joseph is really looking for proof of their changed hearts; he wants to see how they will react

=== We'll take the next verses quickly with very few questions, since it is all repetition of earlier events.

*-- Gen. 44:18-23 Who again is the spokesman for the group? ** Judah

--- In v. 18, to what does Judah compare Joseph? ** Pharaoh

--- What does Judah now start explaining? ** how it was that they had Benjamin with them this trip

--- How does he refer to Benjamin? ** as a little child, a lad

--- What does he say about Benjamin's brother? ** that he is dead

=== Which they probably believed had happened by then.

*-- Gen. 44:24-29 Now what is Judah explaining to Joseph? ** their father's great affection for the "dead" Joseph and Benjamin

--- What does Judah tell the governor that their father said would happen if anything happened to Benjamin? ** he'd die from sorrow

*-- Gen. 44:30-31 What does Judah seem really to believe would happen if he were to go back home with Benjamin? ** it would kill their father

--- Again, how does he continue to refer to Benjamin? ** as a lad, a boy

--- And about how old do we know that Benjamin really is? ** about 30

=== But he is the youngest by several years, isn't he?

*-- Gen. 44:32-34 Who does Judah reveal to this governor is responsible for Benjamin? ** himself, Judah

--- Whose idea had that been? ** Judah's

--- Does Judah seem to take this "surety" business seriously? ** yes

--- Why do you say that? ** because he wanted to stay as a slave instead of Benjamin

--- What reason does Judah give for wanting to trade places with Benjamin? ** (1) he was responsible for Benjamin, and (2) he couldn't bear to see the grief it would cause Jacob if Benjamin didn't return

--- Do you see any signs of jealousy now on the part of the older brothers? ** none

=== Compare these verses with Gen. 37:26-27.

--- How had Judah's concern for his father changed in 22 years? ** even though they all knew how much Joseph meant to their father, Judah had been the one who had suggested selling Joseph as a slave, and now he is willing to become a slave himself instead of Benjamin to save his father further anguish

--- Joseph had evidently been waiting to see how his brothers really felt about things and if they were truly changed men before revealing himself; does he know now? ** yes, their actions are completely opposite from what they had been

REVIEW:

-- What did Joseph have his steward do as his brothers prepared to leave? ** put their money back in their sacks again, and put his own silver cup in Benjamin's sack

-- Did the brothers know this was being done? ** no

-- What was the steward told to ask them about when he chased after them? ** the cup

-- Were the brothers pretty sure they didn't have the cup? ** yes

-- What had the brothers said would happen if they found the cup in one of the sacks? ** that one would be killed, and the rest would be slaves.

-- When did they find out? ** when the steward followed them and they insisted they didn't have the cup and each started opening their sacks

-- Did they just give Benjamin over to be killed? ** no

-- Who seems to have been the leader of the group? ** Judah

-- What did Judah want Joseph to do? ** keep him but let Benjamin go

APPLICATIONS:

** Tell the truth, even in awkward situations.
** Don’t be too quick to say what you will do in a certain situation.
** Think ahead before you do something bad against someone.
** Think of other people’s feelings, not just your own.
** Jealousy is a terrible thing; we should do all we can not only to prevent it, but not be jealous ourselves.
** We should really repent of past wrongs we have done.
** If we have wronged or hurt someone, we should try to make it up to them.
** We can change, and so can others.

Chapter 45: Joseph Reveals Himself

*-- Gen. 45:1 What immediately preceded this verse? ** Judah has offered to stay as a slave instead of Benjamin

--- How had Judah acted toward Benjamin's full brother 22 years earlier, 37:26? ** Judah was the one who suggested selling Joseph as a slave

--- This complete change in Judah, his proof of loyalty and repentance, how do they affect Joseph? ** they made Joseph unable to control his emotions any longer

--- As Joseph is about to lose control of himself, what does Joseph do? ** orders all of the bystanders and servants to go and leave him alone with his brothers

--- What does Joseph have in mind to do once everyone else leaves? ** tell his brothers who he really is

*-- Gen. 45:2 How did Joseph act as he was going to reveal himself to his brothers? ** he wept loudly

--- Who could hear this great governor weeping? ** the Egyptians and Pharaoh's household

=== This makes me wonder if Joseph's "house" were actually within Pharaoh's palace.

=== In the East even now, both joy and sorrow are expressed by very loud cries. My customs book quotes someone as saying that when anyone returns from a long trip, his family would burst into loud cries that could be heard 20 doors off!

=== Now, before we go on, I want you to picture the bewilderment of the 11 brothers. They have been accused of a terrible theft and the supposedly outraged governor has insisted that he'll keep Benjamin as a slave. They are on their faces before him as Judah pleads with him to keep himself instead of Benjamin. Suddenly this mighty man orders everyone else (including the interpreter, it would seem) to leave and suddenly bursts into loud wails. They have no idea at all what it's all about! Keep picturing these verses in your mind as we go along. What drama!!

*-- Gen. 45:3 Now as the brothers are transfixed with astonishment as this mighty man is wailing before them, what statement does he throw at them like a thunderbolt? ** "I am Joseph!"

--- From this and the rest of the chapter, does it sound as though Joseph were proclaiming his identity in an attempt to scare them? ** no, he is just so glad to see them that he has to let them know who he really is

--- What question follows Joseph's revealing of who he is? ** "Is my father still alive?"

--- After his first statement of who he is, I doubt if they hardly heard this question; why don't they answer him? ** they are terrified and confused

=== Now, I'm sure that Joseph must have known that Jacob was still alive, but I think he is just so full of emotion that he wants to talk about Daddy, too.

*-- Gen. 45:4 When they don't answer him, what does Joseph tell his brothers to do? ** to come near to him

=== You can almost see them hesitatingly drawing closer.

--- As they approach him, how does Joseph further identify himself? ** "I'm your brother that you sold as a slave into Egypt."

--- Do you think this served to calm them down? ** no, probably it further scared them

--- What memory do you think might have come to them? ** Joseph's first dream was fulfilled when they of "their own free will" had been prostrating themselves before him!

--- Now just a thought; what do you think was Benjamin's reaction to this disclosure? ** probably complete shock; he'd always been told that his brother was dead, killed by wild animals!

=== So here Benjamin is not only finding out that his full brother is alive, but that he'd been sold to be a slave by the other brothers!

*-- Gen. 45:5-8 Is Joseph now going to rub it in as to what they had done to him? ** no

=== Joseph was a wise man. He knew how his brothers felt and he wanted to comfort them, so he approached the thing that he knew had to be bothering them directly, no beating around the bush.

--- How does he open his words of comfort to them? ** "Don't be unhappy or mad at yourselves that you sold me as a slave."

=== Now we come to a good example of predestination and of God's "working all things together for good for those who love God".

--- Who does Joseph say is actually responsible for his being in Egypt? ** God

--- Why would God do a thing like sending a good boy like Joseph to Egypt as a slave? ** to save the lives of his family

--- What does Joseph say is his relationship to Pharaoh? ** Joseph is like a father to Pharaoh

--- Does it sound as if Joseph had forgiven his brothers for their dastardly treatment of him 22 years earlier? ** yes

*-- Gen. 45:9 What had been Joseph's first thought after identifying himself to his brothers and trying to relieve their guilty feelings? ** for them to tell his father that he's alive and doing very well

--- How does Joseph want his brothers to act? ** in a hurry

--- And how does Joseph want his father to act? ** in a hurry

--- What does Joseph want his father to do in a hurry? ** to go down to Egypt

--- And what does he want his father to know? ** that Joseph is the ruler of all Egypt

*-- Gen. 45:10 Who would take care of Jacob in Egypt? ** Joseph

--- Where in Egypt? ** in Goshen

--- If they lived in Goshen, who would Jacob be able to be near? ** Joseph, the beloved son himself

--- Was it just Jacob who was to come down and be taken care of? ** no, all of the brothers and their families, also, as well as all of their herds and anything else he had

*-- Gen. 45:11 What would Joseph do for Jacob and his family and herds if they came down to Egypt? ** he would take care of them and give them food

--- How much of a visit did Joseph want his father to make in Egypt? ** to live there at least 5 years

--- Why? ** because there were still 5 more years of famine due

--- Why might the brothers perhaps not doubt Joseph's statement that there would be 5 more years of famine? ** (1) if their little brother can be prime minister of Egypt, anything can happen, and (2) his first dream of the brothers' bowing to him had come true, so maybe Joseph was a prophet and knew these things

*-- Gen. 45:12 What does Joseph offer as proof that he is really their brother Joseph? ** that he is speaking to them in their own language himself without an interpreter

--- Interestingly, how does he phrase it, that they can see he's actually himself? ** that Benjamin can see it and that they also can see it

=== Again, putting his full brother Benjamin in a class by himself.

--- We aren't told, but do you think this is going to cause jealousy among the other 10 brothers? ** no!

=== I think they are through with that emotion!

*-- Gen. 45:13 What does Joseph particularly want them to tell Jacob? ** everything they've seen and how splendid and important Joseph is

--- How did Joseph want his brothers to act? ** in haste, quickly
=== Imagine the brothers' state of mind as the words of Joseph sink in. Here their brother is not only alive, but he is the ruler of Egypt. And not only that, but they will have to go home and tell all of this to Jacob, their father.
--- After telling their father all about Joseph's power in Egypt, what kind of an explanation is this story going to demand? ** how Joseph came to be in Egypt in the first place!
=== Talk about eating humble pie!
*-- Gen. 45:14-15 As Joseph finishes talking to them, who does he demonstrate his feelings to first? ** Benjamin
--- What does he do? ** he falls on Benjamin's neck and kisses him and cries
--- And what did Benjamin do? ** responded in kind
--- Then what did Joseph do? ** kissed his other brothers and wept over them as well
--- What reaction does this reception invoke in the 10 older brothers? ** it just doesn't say
=== Benjamin was truly glad to see Joseph without any reservations. However, the others would at least have had mixed emotions about it. We aren't told how the others responded. They were, I'm sure, glad that he was at least still alive and in good health (they didn't have his blood on their hands), but they must have been troubled enough by their treacherous part so as not to react in a totally joyous manner. They may have hugged and kissed him, or they may have done nothing but stare or anything in between. We just aren't told all of the details that we might want!
--- What happened after this greeting? ** they all talked together
*-- Gen. 45:16-18 Who heard about the big news? ** Pharaoh and his court
--- What did they think about it? ** they were glad
=== Often a man who has been promoted over others is disliked. God really was with Joseph to make him so popular with the court that they are glad when something good happens to him.
--- To whom did Pharaoh talk concerning these things? ** to Joseph
--- What does Pharaoh want Joseph to do? ** just what Joseph had told his brothers to do -- to go get their families and come live in Egypt
--- How generous is Pharaoh regarding the family of his prime minister? ** very; he offers them the best of everything in Egypt
*-- Gen. 45:19-20 Again in these verses, who is speaking? ** Pharaoh
--- But what are the first words of v. 19? ** that "you are commanded, ordered"
--- From the KJ, is that "you" who is being ordered, singular or plural? ** singular
--- So who is being commanded by the king to do something? ** Joseph
--- And also from the KJ, when the verse goes on to say "you do this," is that singular or plural? ** plural
=== The NIV uses our type of speech in its transliteration to show this, but the NAS just says "you" in both cases and has quotation marks (punctuation wasn't in the Hebrew). Again, I really like the way the KJ does it and makes it so clear.
--- So what is Joseph commanded by Pharaoh to do, v. 19? ** to tell his brothers to take wagons from Egypt for the families to travel in and then come back to Egypt
--- What about all of their household goods, v. 20? ** Pharaoh says that don't even need to bother bringing anything as they can have anything they want in Egypt
*-- Gen. 45:21-22 Joseph did as Pharaoh had commanded and got the wagons and food ready to send them off; what did he give them in addition to just provisions for the journey? ** he gave each brother a suit of clothes
--- Was there any preference shown in this? ** yes, he gave Benjamin 5 suits plus 300 pieces of

silver

--- Are we told that this preference shown to Benjamin caused any jealousy on the part of the 10 half-brothers? ** no

=== But it is very clear to everyone that Benjamin is preferred by their brother, this powerful governor, above the others. Not only hadn't he been in on the plot to kill or enslave Joseph, but he was Joseph's full brother, both of them being sons of the beloved Rachel. And you can be sure that they are going to be very careful that Benjamin is safe!

=== It was common when you wanted to honor someone or compliment him to give him a "change of clothes". The styles didn't change as they do now, so one could wear the clothes all of his life or until they wore out. My book says that it's said that one famous Oriental poet in the 800's was given so many presents of clothes that when he died he had 100 complete suits of clothes, 200 shirts and 500 turbans. Among Hindus it is common to give a guest some new clothes at the end of a feast.

--- By the way, what does it call Joseph's brothers in v. 21? ** the children of Israel

--- Why "Israel?" ** that was Jacob's other name

*-- Gen. 45:23-24 What present did Joseph send to his father? ** 10 donkeys with choice things of Egypt

--- And then in addition, how does Joseph expect his father's large family to eat on the trip to Egypt? ** he sent 10 more donkeys loaded with food

=== I find it interesting that the first 10 donkeys were males and the next 10 females. I can't figure out if there is a significance to this or not. But the Bible gives this little detail.

--- What final word does Joseph give to his brothers as they leave to go get Jacob and their families? ** not to quarrel on the way home

--- What might be a topic of conversation on the way home that they might perhaps quarrel about? ** how to explain all of this to Jacob about Joseph's being in Egypt and not dead and whose fault it all was

--- Why can't they just gloss over the details? ** Jacob will be able to discuss the details with Joseph himself when he gets to Egypt.

--- They have Simeon back, why can't they just take the presents, give some false story to Jacob and move and not go back to Egypt at all? ** (1) Benjamin is with them and has heard the whole thing; they would either have to get rid of Benjamin or threaten him sufficiently to keep him quiet; and (2) they've been told by a prophet (Joseph) that the famine will be for 5 more years, and they'll need food again before that time is over.

=== Also, my guess would be that they probably figure that it's best just to come clean and tell the whole story once and for all. Deception not only would be useless, they are probably afraid to try it and tired of the whole mess.

*-- Gen. 45:25-26 What kind of lies did they make up and tell to their father? ** evidently none; they seem just to have come out and given the facts that Joseph had told them to

--- Which facts are specifically mentioned? ** that Joseph is alive and is the ruler of Egypt

--- How did Jacob take his news? ** he was absolutely stunned and didn't believe it

*-- Gen. 45:27-28 What finally convinced Jacob that they weren't making it all up? ** the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry Jacob, the women and the children

--- What did that do for Jacob, end of v. 27? ** it made his spirit revive

--- Does Jacob then just want to stay in Canaan? ** no, he wants to go see Joseph

--- After seeing Joseph, what is Jacob ready to do? ** die

=== We'll find out, though (47:28), that he will have 17 years more of life in which to enjoy being with Joseph.

REVIEW:

-- What did Joseph tell his servants to do after Judah was through talking? ** to leave the room
-- Then what did Joseph do? ** wept aloud
-- What was the reaction of the brothers as Joseph revealed who he was? ** they were terrified
-- Who did Joseph tell them had really sent him into Egypt? ** God
-- Why? ** to save them alive when the famine came
-- What did Joseph say he wanted them to do? ** all come down into Egypt with their families and live there in Goshen and let him take care of them
-- What did Joseph do as he finished talking? ** fell on his brothers' necks and wept and kissed them
-- Who heard about Joseph's brothers' coming? ** Pharaoh
-- How did he take this news? ** he was glad and told him to send for his father and bring them all down there to stay
-- Did the brothers go back home empty handed? ** no, Joseph gave them wagons and gifts and food
-- Did Jacob believe the good news at first? ** no
-- What finally convinced him that Joseph really was alive and well? ** the wagons and gifts

APPLICATION:

** Something bad we do may not always stay hidden; our misdeeds may come back to haunt us.
** Oh what tangled webs we weave when first we practice to deceive -- it's better to tell the truth in the first place.
** Forgive those who have done wrong to us.
** God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.
** Though we may not see it, things do happen for our own good if we love the Lord.
** During troubled times, don't give up hope.
** We should learn from our mistakes.

Chapter 46: Jacob's descendants named; Jacob finally sees Joseph

=== Joseph has revealed himself to his brothers, and they have gone back to Canaan and given their father Jacob the wonderful news about Joseph and said that they are all to go down to Egypt to be taken care of there during the rest of the famine.

*-- Gen. 46:1 Does Jacob decide simply to stay in Canaan or to make the long trip to Egypt? ** go to Egypt

--- Interestingly, what does it call Jacob in this verse? ** Israel

=== Again, I haven't been able to find a pattern as to when he's called Jacob and when he's called Israel.

--- What did he take with him? ** everything that he had

--- As he traveled, what did Jacob do? ** offered a sacrifice to God

--- To which God did he offer this sacrifice? ** to the God of his father Isaac

=== I find that interesting, also. But perhaps this is just to show that God was the same God who had made covenants with them, not just some local god. Jacob had already taken the Lord to be his own God.

--- Where did Jacob make this offering? ** in Beersheba

=== Beersheba is a practical boundary between Canaan and Egypt. There lie only 60 miles of desert between Beersheba and a dry river called the Brook of Egypt. He may have felt that this was a good place to stop and worship before the final step in leaving his homeland.

*-- Gen. 46:2 Jacob offered a sacrifice and went to bed; what happened then? ** God spoke to him in a vision

--- To whom does it say that God spoke? ** to Israel

--- But what does God call Israel? ** Jacob

--- What does Jacob say when spoken to? ** "here I am"

*-- Gen. 46:3 How did God identify himself? ** said He was the God of his father

=== Now, at this point the Schofield Bible has notes that say that this is an example of God's "permissive" will as opposed to God "directive" will in that He allowed poor old Jacob to leave Canaan (where he really should have stayed in faith) and let Jacob go into Egypt to bring his whole family together. But let's look into it.

--- What does God tell Jacob about going to Egypt, whether he should or not? ** not to be afraid to go

--- Does it sound as if Jacob were just raring to go into Egypt? ** no, at least to me it sounds as if he were hesitant

=== To me it sounds as though Jacob were going but that he had been afraid to go and had sort of stopped on the way to ask God's advice.

--- What does God say He will do for Jacob in Egypt? ** make a great nation of him

=== Let's quickly look at something.

*-- Gen. 15:13-16 Why might Jacob have been afraid to go to Egypt? ** he must have known this prophecy that God had given to Abraham and knew that his family was headed for hard times in a strange land

--- But should Jacob know from this that they won't stay in Egypt forever? ** yes

--- When would they go back to Canaan? ** in the fourth generation

=== We'll go into this more when we look at Exodus.

=== But still I think that the idea of taking our families into a prolonged time of hard times would be difficult to deal with.

--- Also, from the covenants that God had made with 3 generations of his family (himself included), what did Jacob know about the land of Canaan itself? ** that it was promised to him and his descendants forever

=== So he may also have been wondering if he should leave that land that his family was going to own.

*-- Gen. 46:4 How else does God reassure Jacob, first part of verse? ** He will be with him by going with him into Egypt

--- Canaan had been promised to Jacob; but again, does he know if he will ever get back to it again? ** yes, God also reassures him that He will bring him back

--- Someone with a KJ, is the "you" singular or plural? ** singular

=== So this could be taken as just bringing Jacob back personally when Jacob dies.

--- However, again from the prophecy in Gen. 15:13-16, what would Jacob know about his family? ** that they would also come back to Canaan

--- But, again, from the prophecy, how long does he know they will probably be there? ** for 4 generations

--- But from the verses back in Gen. 15:13-16, does Jacob (or at least his family at some time) actually have to go out of Canaan? ** yes

--- Why? ** otherwise how would the prophecy of "coming out" from the nation they serve be fulfilled

=== And God's prophecies are always fulfilled, aren't they?

--- So does this sound as though God were just allowing an eager Jacob to go to Egypt, or does it sound as though God were telling him "go on; go on down"? ** to me it sounds as though God is instructing Jacob to go to Egypt

=== "Permissive will" and "directive will" of God are not Biblical terms. If God allows something, it is because it is in His plan, not "well, all right, but I really don't want to let you do this, but I guess you can just go ahead if you insist." God has His will, and whatever He has decided is what will be. But God doesn't reveal all of his will to us. However, if we act according to His revealed will, then we are within all of His will. Some people call this God's revealed will and His sovereign will.

--- What does "Joseph shall put his hand upon your eyes" mean? ** some people say that it means that Jacob had trouble seeing and that Joseph would heal him, however, I think that it means that when Jacob died, Joseph would be there to close his eyes after death

=== Especially since we know that Jacob later had very dim vision (58:10).

*-- Gen. 46:5-7 Does God's reassurance and encouragement prove sufficient for Jacob? ** yes, he continues on his journey

--- How did he travel? ** Jacob, the women, and the children rode in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent for them

--- Is this just a small party of people going off by themselves? ** no, it's a large family with all of their herds

=== I've wondered about their slaves. We know that earlier Jacob had lots of slaves. Did he take them with them? Did he release them from their slavery? Had they already been released from their slavery due to the famine? Also, slaves were often very close to the family and very loyal, so it wouldn't be as if they were just a bunch of strangers. Remember Abraham's army? Or were the slaves just included in the "property" that Jacob took with him? But we aren't given any details on this aspect at all, so let's not speculate.

--- How can all of these people find food on such a journey in a famine-stricken country (it will be a journey of about a month), 45:21? ** Joseph had sent them food for the journey

--- How many of Jacob's family decided to stay in Canaan and try to hold out during the rest of the famine there? ** none, "all Jacob's seed" went

=== We're going to skip some of the next verses. They're just lists of the names of all of Jacob's descendants at that time who went with him to Egypt. However we will read through the totals as they come and also notice the order in which they are listed. At this time it has been about 45 years since Jacob first married.

*-- Gen. 46:8, 15 How many descendants did Jacob have by Leah? ** 33

=== This number doesn't include in-laws. By the way, the verses specifically mention Judah's 2 sons who were married to Tamar and died, but they are not included in the total.

--- But glance at v. 12; which sons that are alive does Judah have with him? ** Shelah, Pharez, and Zarah

--- What do we know about them? ** Shelah was the one that didn't get to marry Tamar after his 2 brothers died, and Pharez and Zarah are the twins that Judah had by his daughter-in-law Tamar

=== I find it interesting that Judah has the twins with him, the ones he'd had by his daughter-in-law Tamar. So my thinking is that she must have come back and lived with Judah's family after having gotten pregnant by him. Maybe she had even finally married Shelah. But we aren't told that at all, so we need to be careful.

--- How many children had Leah had, v. 15? ** 6 sons + Dinah = 7

--- Where were they all born? ** in Padanaram, Syria

--- What was Leah doing up there? ** her father Laban lived there and that's where she and her sister Rachel were raised and where Jacob married them and stayed for some years

--- So she had 7 children; then how many grandchildren did Leah have? ** 26 (33 - 7 = 26)

=== Actually it 24 grandchildren + 2 great-grandchildren by one of Tamar's twin sons by Judah

=== It mentions just Dinah, with no children. If she had married, she would probably have been with her husband's family. Though she may have been widowed and gone back home. However, my feeling is that she never married after the fiasco with Shechem, but it's useless to speculate on this. But this is the last we hear of poor Dinah. So let's go on.

*-- Gen. 46:18 How many descendants did Jacob have by Leah's handmaid Zilpah? ** 16

--- How many children did Zilpah have? ** 2 sons

--- So how many grandchildren? ** 14

=== Again, 2 of these are great-grandchildren, so there are 12 grandchildren. Of interest is the fact that one of these grandchildren is mentioned as being a girl! She and Dinah seem to have been Jacob's only female descendants up to this point. But they needed lots of males, as the inheritance and continuance of the name of Israel (Jacob) would be through the male line. Of course, there may possibly have been granddaughters who had been married off to the men of the land and were living with their husbands' families. But, again, that is speculation and not important to the story here, so let's not waste our time on that.

*-- Gen. 46:22 How many descendants did Jacob have by Rachel? ** 14

--- How many children did Rachel have? ** 2

--- So how many grandchildren? ** 12

=== And here we have what I've brought up several times before.

--- In v. 21, how many sons did "the lad" Benjamin have? ** 10!

*-- Gen. 46:25 How many descendants did Jacob have by Rachel's handmaid Bilhah? ** 7

--- How many children did Bilhah have? ** 2

--- How many grandchildren? ** 5

=== All right. So that's the descendants of Jacob. Now as a matter of interest (at least to me!) let's look at the order of the 4 wives whose descendants are listed.

--- Who is named first, v. 15? ** Leah

--- Second, v. 18? ** Zilpah

--- Who was Zilpah? ** Leah's handmaid

--- Who was listed third, v. 22? ** Rachel

--- Then who was listed fourth, v. 25? ** Bilhah

--- And who was Bilhah? ** Rachel's handmaid

--- Now, who was the first wife? ** Leah

--- And who was the second wife? ** Rachel

=== Well, naturally the first wife is listed first.

--- But why might a handmaid/concubine have been listed ahead of the second full wife Rachel? ** because the handmaid's children were to be counted as belonging to the wife, so Zilpah's children and grandchildren were sort of Leah's as well and Bilhah's were sort of Rachel's

=== I don't think this is important, but I do think it gives us a better understanding of the times and a better picture of things. So back to the story.

*-- Gen. 46:26-27 How many descendants in total traveled with Jacob and went into Egypt with him, v. 26? ** 66

=== So, the descendants going into Egypt with Jacob are 11 sons, 1 daughter, 49 grandsons, 1 granddaughter, and 4 great-grandsons.

--- What other people do we know who also went with him? ** daughters-in-law (and granddaughters-in-law)

--- Jacob had 66 descendants traveling with him; how many were waiting for him in Egypt? ** 3

--- What does v. 27 say was the total of the people of the house of Jacob? ** 70

--- 66 + 3 = 69; how do we get 70? ** that would, I imagine, include Jacob himself

=== By the way, since you may notice this sometime and wonder about it, there is a different number of 75 given in the New Testament in Stephen's apology (Acts 7:14). This probably excludes Jacob himself and Joseph and his sons and then includes some daughters-in-law or some such, but we aren't going to go into that. That really isn't important to our story here.

--- Rachel, Joseph's mother is dead, but what about Leah; we aren't told anything about her, but what do you think; would she still be alive? ** I say that she had to have been alive and gone with them in order for Joseph's second prophetic dream to be fulfilled (37:9-10)

--- What was that dream? ** the sun and moon, representing Joseph's father and mother bowed to him, as well as the 11 stars representing his brothers

=== Again, we don't hear anything about all of Jacob's slaves, whether he sold them all or took them or turned them free. During a famine it would be hard enough to feed your own family, let alone scores or hundreds of slaves. But we aren't told anything about them.

=== So Jacob and his family are on the way down to Egypt. By the way, from the ages that the Bible gives for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we can figure that it was approximately 200 years between the time that God gave the promise to Abraham about the hard times in store for his descendants and when Jacob went into Egypt. (Abraham was 85 when God told him that, so 15 years until the birth of Isaac + 60 more years until the birth of Jacob + 130 being Jacob's age when he entered Egypt. 15 + 60 + 130 = 205.) We will get into this more later in the book of Exodus.

*-- Gen. 46:28 As they come into Egypt, what does Jacob do? ** sends Judah to Joseph

--- Why? ** to tell Joseph they've come and to get directions to Goshen

--- Why Goshen? ** because that is the place in Egypt that Joseph had said they would be able to live in

--- Now, again, which son did Jacob send to get the directions? ** Judah

--- And again, what is the birth order of Judah? ** the 4th son

--- We aren't told, but why might he have sent Judah and not one of the 3 older sons? ** Judah seems to be the responsible one and sort of head of the sons by now, it seems to me; a natural leader

--- I don't know if there is a connection or not, but from which of the brothers do we know that David, Solomon, and all of the kings of the southern kingdom will descend? ** from Judah

--- And what will the southern kingdom be called? ** Judah

=== So Judah's descendants will be natural leaders, as well.

=== Anyway, let's get back to Jacob here! Here he has traveled all the way down from Canaan into Egypt and has now sent Judah to ask Joseph for directions to the land of Goshen.

*-- Gen. 46:29-30 Now comes the best part! They finally get to Goshen.

--- And in the meantime what is Joseph doing? ** hitching up his chariot and riding out to meet his father Jacob

--- What touching scene as they meet after 22 years, during which time Jacob had thought Joseph to be dead? ** Joseph falls on his father's neck and hugs him and cries for quite a while

=== I wish more verses were given to this!

--- How much of a satisfaction is it to Jacob to finally see his beloved son again after having mourned for him for 22 years? ** Jacob feels so satisfied that he is ready to die now; he's fulfilled the desire of his life

=== But we will find out a little later that Jacob will enjoy 17 more years of being with Joseph.

--- And what do these 2 verses call Jacob? ** Israel

=== Again, I can't find a pattern!

*-- Gen. 46:31-32 After finally greeting his old father, Joseph settled down to business -- getting them located.

--- To whom does Joseph tell his plans? ** to his brothers and the whole household

--- Who does he tell them that he is going to approach about it? ** Pharaoh, the king

--- Joseph's going to tell Pharaoh that they've arrived, and what will he tell him that they've brought with them? ** all of their flocks and herds and everything they own

--- What is Joseph going to tell Pharaoh is the occupation of his family? ** that they are shepherds and cowboys

*-- Gen. 46:33-34 What does Joseph figure Pharaoh will do after hearing of Jacob's arrival? ** have them come see him

--- Someone with a KJ, is the "you" in v. 33 where Pharaoh would call "you", is it singular or plural? ** plural

--- What does Joseph say that Pharaoh will ask them? ** what work they do

--- What does Joseph tell his brothers to answer? ** that they've always been herdsmen

--- Why should they say that? ** so that Pharaoh will have them go live in the lush pasture lands of Goshen

--- How did the Egyptians feel about shepherds? ** they despised them

=== There are some theories (that we won't go into!) as to why the Egyptians hated them, but we don't really know just why shepherds were so detested, but it worked out well for Jacob and his family, as it would give them the best land in Egypt and would also isolate them from the Egyptians.

=== Also, the Jews had beards and hair on their heads, whereas the Egyptians all shaved their heads (including the women) and beards and looked down on those with hair. This would further separate them from each other, further isolate them.

--- Why would this isolation prove important? ** so that they would remain a separate people and breed up into the great nation that God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

--- In the last chapter it was said that Jacob and his sons would live in the land of Goshen; who had talked about it then? ** Joseph

=== Pharaoh hadn't mentioned where they would live when he invited them down. Evidently Joseph knew where a bunch of herds would be sent.

=== Think how popular Joseph must have been with Pharaoh for him to have invited a large family and all of their herds to come down and live in the country during this time of famine. You would think that the people would have resented it, but God made everyone like Joseph. And if they didn't, what could they do about it

=== Now just a thought, Pharaoh had told Joseph to tell them just to leave everything they had and he'd supply them with what they needed.

--- Perhaps why didn't they leave everything in Canaan? ** perhaps if they had, Pharaoh would have just given them a place in the city with lots of luxuries, and they would have integrated into the Egyptian society

=== And that isn't the plan that God had for them. But this is just a "perhaps." We need to be careful.

REVIEW

-- What did Jacob do as he started his trip to Egypt? ** sacrificed

-- Was Jacob doing wrong in going to Egypt? ** no, God reassured him and told him to go

-- What did Jacob take with him to Egypt? ** everything, his entire family and all of his herds

-- When they got to Egypt, how many were "of the house of Jacob"? ** 70 including Joseph and his 2 sons

-- After a tearful reunion with his father, where does Joseph prepare to take him? ** to see Pharaoh

-- What doctrine would you say is taught in this chapter? ** predestination; Jacob's family had to go out of Canaan in order to fulfill the prophecy of coming back in

APPLICATIONS:

** God works out His plans

** We should pray about what we do.

Chapter 47: Jacob and family settled in Goshen

*-- Gen. 47:1-2 After greeting his father, to whom does Joseph go? ** Pharaoh

--- Why? ** to announce that his family has arrived

--- Did Pharaoh know that they were coming? ** yes, he had invited them and sent down wagons and food for their trip

--- What did Joseph say they had with them? ** all their flocks and herds and everything they owned

--- And where did he say they were at the moment? ** in the land of Goshen

=== After all, they had to stop somewhere! And Joseph probably had the authority to settle them where he wanted to.

--- Did Joseph go to Pharaoh by himself to make this announcement to the king? ** no, he took 5 of his brothers

--- Are we told which brothers? ** no

=== Naturally I'm curious about that! My guess would be Leah's first 4 and Benjamin, but we aren't told that at all. And it obviously isn't important for us to know, so we shouldn't speculate!

*-- Gen. 47:3-4 What did Pharaoh ask Joseph's brothers? ** what kind of work they did

--- Was this a surprise question for them? ** no, Joseph had said that the king would ask them that (46:34)

--- What did they answer? ** that they and their fathers were shepherds

--- Why did they say that? ** (1) it was true, and (2) Joseph had told them to

--- What does that mean, "our fathers"? ** that this was the family occupation way back, not just something they had recently started doing

--- What did they ask of Pharaoh? ** that he would let them live in Goshen with their herds

--- But how long do they seem to indicate that they plan on staying; permanently or temporarily? ** they said they had come to "sojourn" there, which sounds like temporarily

*-- Gen. 47:5-6 Did Pharaoh answer directly to Joseph's brothers? ** at first in v. 3 he seemed to, but it doesn't seem so in these verses; because when they asked the question about the land, Pharaoh answered Joseph

--- Why might that have been? ** my guess is that the king didn't speak Hebrew and Joseph was acting as interpreter

--- How generous was Pharaoh in his answer to the brothers? ** very

--- Where did he say they could live? ** in the best of this famine-stricken land

--- What else did Pharaoh tell Joseph, end of v. 6? ** that if any of his brothers were capable men to put them in charge of Pharaoh's own herds, also

=== I would imagine that Pharaoh already had boss men among his herders. So this would be showing special favor to Joseph's brothers by offering to replace them with these foreigners, which one wouldn't think would make them very popular. I wonder if they took the job! I'd doubt it, as they seem to want to be off by themselves, but, again, we aren't told.

*-- Gen. 47:7-8 After having presented 5 of his brothers to Pharaoh, Joseph now presents whom to the king separately? ** his father Jacob

--- Did Jacob seem to have been scared and trembling before this mighty ruler? ** no, or at least if he were, it seems to me that he didn't show it

--- What did Jacob do? ** blessed Pharaoh

=== Jacob "kept his cool." Of course, this could have been because he was so old and age was respected, but remember, this man Jacob had wrestled with the angel of the Lord! And the

Lord had said He'd be with him.

=== Usually the more powerful blesses the subordinate, but perhaps Jacob's extreme age gave him a superior position at the moment in this case. Also, he had the special position of being the father of the highly favored Joseph.

--- After receiving Jacob's blessing, what did Pharaoh ask Jacob? ** how old was he

=== I think that was probably a complement to Jacob, recognizing his age, a polite thing to do. Old people usually like to tell their age!

*-- Gen. 47:9-10 How old was Jacob at this time? ** 130

=== This is an important number, in that from it can be figured how old various people were and when various events occurred.

--- In what polite but clever way does Jacob give his age? ** "my extreme years have been few and evil, and I'm not nearly so old as my father and grandfather"

--- What poetical term does Jacob use to describe his life? ** the years of his pilgrimage

--- But what does that word, "pilgrimage", also bring to mind? ** that this world isn't our permanent home

=== Like the song, "I'm just a poor and wandering stranger…just a'passin' through!" "This world is not my home!"

--- What did Jacob do before leaving Pharaoh? ** blessed Pharaoh again

*-- Gen. 47:11-12 So what did Joseph do after presenting some of his brothers and his father to the king in v. 11? ** got them settled in the best land of Egypt

--- Does Pharaoh know about this? ** yes, he had ordered it

--- What does it call the land here? ** Rameses

=== My Bible dictionary says this is a city in the land of Goshen. Evidently the pharaoh Rameses had done some building there. Goshen is in the northeastern part of the delta of Egypt.

--- Then what did Joseph do for them in v. 12? ** got them supplied with food

--- How did he determine how much food to give them? ** by the size of their individual families

*-- Gen. 47:13-14 How bad was the famine? ** very severe

--- Which lands do we know for sure were involved in this famine? ** Egypt and Canaan

=== If Egypt and Canaan were involved, one could be pretty sure that Ammon and Moab and Edom were also, and probably others.

--- But where was there food? ** Egypt's storehouses

--- Why? ** because Joseph had gathered it because of the dream that God had given to Pharaoh

--- Is there evidently going to be enough food to last out the famine? ** yes

--- Is there evidently going to be enough money to buy the food for all of the period of the famine? ** no, it's all been collected

--- Who was the head money collector? ** Joseph

--- What did Joseph do with the money? ** took it to Pharaoh

=== So Joseph himself isn't getting rich off of this famine.

*-- Gen. 47:15 What happened to the Egyptians' and Canaanites' money? ** it ran out

--- Who then came to Joseph? ** the Egyptians

--- How many Egyptians? ** all of them

--- What did the Egyptians ask Joseph? ** to give them food even though they'd run out of money

--- What might they have been implying by "why should we die in your presence"? ** Joseph was in charge of distributing the food and they knew there was plenty of food left; since they were out of money, was Joseph just going to stand by with his full storehouses and watch them starve to death

*-- Gen. 47:16-17 Did Joseph suggest welfare to Pharaoh? ** no

--- What did Joseph do? ** he told the people to bring him all of their livestock in exchange for food

--- How long did that food last? ** for a year

=== I've wondered how they still had livestock, but maybe there was stubble the animals could graze on. You would think they would all have been killed and eaten. However, the people may have figured that the famine would soon be over and they would need their herds again. Better to nourish an animal through a famine and have a good animal later than to eat an animal that is just tough skin and bones. Also, the Egyptians worshipped cows, so they wouldn't have eaten those, though they could have eaten other animals.

--- Did the people go along with Joseph's idea? ** yes

--- But did they actually have any choice? ** no, it was either that or starve to death

--- Now, where had v. 15 said that they was now no more money? ** in Egypt and Canaan

--- And who exchanged their cattle for food? ** the Egyptians

--- Who aren't mentioned here? ** the Canaanites

=== And there is no more mention of the people from Canaan. I wonder what happened to them? Did many of them die from starvation? Did they move to Egypt and bring their cattle with them to exchange for food? We aren't told any of this. In fact, the plight of the Canaanites isn't mentioned anymore at all. So let's just go on about the condition of the Egyptians. That is what is important to our story.

*-- Gen. 47:18-19 Did the food the Egyptians got for their cattle last out the famine? ** no

--- What did the people do after the year's food they'd received for their livestock was eaten up? ** went to Joseph again for food

--- What did the people suggest? ** that Joseph buy their lands and themselves in exchange for food for the rest of the famine

--- Who had previously suggested selling the livestock in exchange for food? ** Joseph

--- Who now suggests that the people sell their lands and themselves in exchange for food? ** the people themselves

=== Before, the people had just come and asked for food when they were out of money. This time they barter.

--- Why might they have come and offered to sell themselves instead of just coming and asking for food? ** perhaps they realized that Joseph was no "softie" and that he wouldn't just hand out food

== I guess they know by now that they aren't going to get something for nothing. This wasn't a welfare state!

*-- Gen. 47:20 Did Joseph go along with the people's plan? ** yes

--- How many people had to become landless slaves in order to live? ** at least all of the Egyptians

--- Do you think this would make Jacob and his family more popular with the Egyptians as they sell their family lands and enslaves themselves and their children, to see these detested foreigners, the family of the ruler of Egypt who has reduced them to these straits, flourishing free? ** I wouldn't think so, but we must remember that God was with Joseph and had made him very popular with the people

=== Or maybe they were just so grateful for Joseph's having stored up this food that they were glad for anything good for him and his family. But again, remember, Joseph was just under Pharaoh, the second most important man in the kingdom. You can be sure that Pharaoh and his family weren't on short rations, and no one would have expected them to be. So perhaps they felt the same about Joseph and his family.But we need to be careful not to speculate too much or to make our "wonderings" seem like facts. We're given no details on how the Egyptians felt.

--- Anyway, who was now the owner of all of the private land in Egypt? ** Pharaoh

--- It always seemed rather mean to me that Joseph wasn't more merciful; but who had been kind to Joseph and had elevated him to such a high position in Egypt? ** Pharaoh

=== So, actually, Joseph was being a faithful servant to Pharaoh.

--- Now, what had God told Joseph's great-grandfather about people who were good to his descendants? ** God had told Abraham that He would bless those who were good to them

--- How was God now blessing Pharaoh (who was blessing Joseph and his family)? ** God was giving Pharaoh all of the private land in Egypt and absolute control of the people

*-- Gen. 47:21 What did Joseph do with the people after enslaving them? ** moved them all out of the country into the cities

--- Why might he have done this? ** it would be easier to distribute the food; also, if they are no longer on their former land, they won't be so likely to have second thoughts about it when the famine is over

*-- Gen. 47:22 Who was exempt from this taking of lands and enslavement? ** the priests

--- Then how did they live? ** Pharaoh took care of them free

=== One might say this was a state religion.

*== Gen. 47:23-24 What does Joseph remind the people of, first part of v. 23? ** that he had bought them and their land for the king

--- And what does Joseph now give to the people? ** seed

--- What were they to do now? ** plant the seed

=== Now here is something I found interesting. There are 3 different Hebrew words used in this passage: bread (or food), grain, and seed. In v. 15, the people asked for bread, food. In v. 14 it says that they bought grain with the money. Then in v. 19 the people say for Joseph for buy them and their land for bread (food) again. But then later in v. 19 they ask for seed, something to plant. And here in v. 23 Joseph tells them that he is giving them seed to sow. At this point everyone and everything in Egypt belonged to Pharaoh. The end of the drought approaches. It almost sounds as though that if the people could have held out a year longer they wouldn't have had to sell themselves and their lands. But, of course, they needed something to eat during that year.

--- The people belong to Pharaoh now; naturally everything that they grew would belong to Pharaoh, wouldn't it? ** no, only 20%

--- What about the other 4/5? ** they could keep that

--- Out of this 80% that they could keep, what were they expected to do? ** feed themselves after the harvest and then save enough to plant for the next year

=== Again, I had some thoughts about details that we aren't told. The people had been moved into the cities. What land were they now to sow? Were they allowed to sow the land that had formerly belonged to them? Were they allotted land that would sort of be theirs though still belonging to Pharaoh? Again, we aren't given any details. But I'm sure that Joseph had it all figured out.

*-- Gen. 47:25-26 Did all of this seem to be agreeable with the people? ** yes

--- Did the 20% tax law last very long? ** yes, "until this day"

--- Who wrote the book of Genesis? ** Moses

=== So that 20% tax was still in effect at least 200 years later

--- Again, what exception to the 20% tax? ** the priests' lands

--- Why didn't the priests have to pay 20% of what they grew? ** because Pharaoh hadn't taken their land, so what they grew was their own

=== So it doesn't sound to me as if they people came out very badly with their bargain. Except for the "deed" to the land, you might say they still owned it. Or at least owned some land, whether their original land or not.

*-- Gen. 47:27-28 How do Jacob and his family fare? ** they had enormous families and seem to have acquired property, or at least many possessions

--- How long did Jacob live in Egypt? ** 17 years

--- So how old did he live to be? ** 147 years

=== This is another important age that we may use at other times in figuring things out.

*-- Gen. 47:29 After living 17 years in Egypt, what was coming? ** the time for Jacob to die

--- To whom did he want to talk as death approached? ** Joseph

--- Why? ** to insure that Jacob wouldn't be buried in Egypt

--- How did he want Joseph to swear? ** by putting his hand "under his father's thigh"

=== Again, the word testimony probably is connected with this.

--- Have we ever run into this way of making an oath before? ** yes

--- Where? ** (Gen. 24:2) Abraham had his servant swear that way that he wouldn't get a Canaanite wife for Isaac

--- What comparable method do we use today? ** we put our hand on the Bible

=== So we swear by what's important to us, don't we!

*-- Gen. 47:30-31 Where did Jacob want to be buried? ** with his fathers

--- Where was that? ** in the Cave of Machpelah

--- Where was that? ** in Canaan near Hebron

--- And where had they gotten that? ** Abraham had bought it at the time of Sarah's death

--- Why would Jacob talk to Joseph about this? ** Joseph was an important man in Egypt and the one who could arrange a burial to suit Jacob

--- Did Joseph agree to this? ** yes

--- Could Jacob have been buried in Egypt? ** no

--- Why not? ** because when the Lord had first told Jacob to go down to Egypt, He had also told him that He would bring him back again (46:4)

=== Remember, that "you" had been in the singular. So in order to fulfill this promise of the Lord to Jacob, this prophecy, Jacob had to be taken back to Canaan at some point in his life, and here he was ready to die, so he would have to be taken back there for burial.

REVIEW:

-- When Jacob and his family got to Egypt, where did Joseph take some of them? ** to see Pharaoh

-- After answering Pharaoh's question as to their occupation, what did Pharaoh tell Joseph? ** to let them live in Goshen and put any capable men of them in charge of Pharaoh's herds.

-- How old was Jacob when he entered Egypt? ** 130

-- How old was Joseph when his family entered Egypt? ** 39

-- About how long had it been since God told Abraham about his descendants would have a hard time and then spoil the nation that was mean to them? ** approximately 200 years

-- As the famine continued, how did people get food? ** bought if from Joseph with money

-- After their money ran out, how did they get food? ** traded their herds for a year's supply

-- Whose idea had that been? ** Joseph's

-- After that, how did they get food? ** traded their lands and themselves for food
-- Whose idea was that? ** the people's
-- After the famine, what arrangements were made with the people? ** Joseph gave them the first year's seed. They were to plant this, keep 80%, give 20%, and live off of their portion, saving out enough to plant for the next year.
-- How long did Jacob live in Egypt? ** 17 years
-- What did Jacob make Joseph promise as the time of Jacob's death drew near? ** that he'd bury him in the promised land of Canaan in the Cave of Machpelah.

APPLICATIONS:

** Work hard for your boss
** The Lord will keep His promises.
** We should remember that we, too, are pilgrims during this life. This world now isn't the main thing.

Chapter 48: Jacob blesses Joseph's sons

=== OK, Jacob is living in Egypt.

-- How long has he been in Egypt (47:9, 28)? ** for 17 years

-- And how old is he now (47:28)? ** 147 years old

-- So Jacob is now very old and it's close to the time he must die, so what promise had he extracted from Joseph at the end of the last chapter? ** that he will be buried with his fathers in the cave of Macpelah

*-- Gen. 48:1-2 When does this chapter take place in relationship to the events of the last chapter? ** "after" the last chapter

--- What does someone come and tell Joseph? ** that his father was sick

--- What did Joseph do about it? ** took his 2 sons and went to see Jacob

--- What are his sons' names? ** Manasseh and Ephraim

--- Again, from 47:28 how many years had Jacob been in Egypt? ** 17

--- So how old would that make Joseph? ** 56 (30 when stood before Pharaoh + 7 years of plenty + 2 years of famine + 17 years that his father has been in Egypt)

--- And when were his sons born in relation to Jacob's being in Egypt (46:27)? ** before Jacob went to Egypt

--- Then between what ages would these sons be? ** Manasseh and Ephraim were born between the time that Joseph received a wife after interpreting Pharaoh's dream at the age of 30 and when Jacob and family entered Egypt when Joseph was 39. Therefore, the boys would be somewhere between 17 and 25 at the time that Joseph takes them to see their dying grandfather Jacob (56-39=17 and 56-31=25)

=== If you ever see a picture of this scene, you'll probably see 2 little boys with an old man! But they were definitely young men at the time. See what we can come up with if we just pay attention to the little details that God gives us?! Isn't that fun?! Also, though I don't think this of itself is too important, it does give us a better mental picture of what is going on.

--- Jacob hears that Joseph is coming to see him, so what does he do? ** rallies his strength and sits up in bed to receive him

*-- Gen. 48:3-4 Jacob tells Joseph about God's having appeared to him and talked to him; where was this? ** Luz

--- What is Luz's other name (35:6)? ** Bethel

--- When did God appear to Jacob at Bethel? ** it was actually two times: (1) when Jacob fled from Esau on his way to Laban's and he had the dream of the ladder (28:13-15), and (2) on Jacob's return to the land of Canaan after 20 years in Haran and after the fiasco at Shechem as he went to see his father Isaac in Hebron (35:11-12)

--- What had God said on both of those occasions? ** that Jacob would have multitudinous descendants and that God would give him the land of Canaan

--- For how long would Jacob's descendants own the land of Canaan? ** forever; it would be an everlasting possession

--- Who are Jacob's descendants today? ** the Jews

--- And does God keep his promises? ** of course!

=== So someday…! But to go on.

*-- Gen. 48:5-6 What unusual thing did Jacob take away from Joseph? ** his 2 sons

=== So he's adopting them.

--- To what extent did Jacob intend to regard Joseph's sons as his own? ** the same as Reuben and Simeon

--- What was the birth order of Reuben and Simeon? ** the first and second sons of Jacob

--- And who was their mother? ** Leah

--- Who was Joseph's mother? ** Rachel

=== I don't think the mothers are important here, just that this shows that it's the very first and second born that Jacob is comparing Ephraim and Manasseh to.

--- Would this be entirely bad for Joseph? ** no, it would be giving Joseph's descendants 2 parts of the inheritance from Jacob as opposed to one part as Joseph's brothers' descendants would be receiving

--- At least later in the law of Moses, who was to receive twice as much as the others? ** the first born

--- So, in the sense of inheritance, what position is Jacob now placing Joseph? ** as his first born

--- Was Joseph in any sense the first born? ** yes, he was the first born of Rachel, the wife that Jacob had wanted in the first place

--- What if Joseph were to have other sons besides Ephraim and Manasseh; would Jacob take them away also? ** no, they would be Joseph's

--- Would any other children that Joseph had have a special inheritance from Jacob like Ephraim and Manasseh? ** no, they would evidently inherit as if they were sons of Ephraim and Manasseh

=== I wondered if this means that Joseph had other children after his father died who just aren't mentioned but who became absorbed in the families of Ephraim and Manasseh, though I doubt it because nothing is mentioned about any other children in any of the censuses, etc. But this is all that is said about it, so we really shouldn't speculate on this.

*-- Gen. 48:7 What sad incident does Jacob recall as he talks to Joseph? ** the death of Rachel, Joseph's mother

=== The NAS and NIV say "to my sorrow", but that isn't in the text, at least not in the text that the KJ uses.

--- According to the KJ, Jacob says something interesting about her death; what is it? ** that Rachel died "by him"

--- Any thoughts on what that might mean? ** (1) he was near her when she died, (2) that she died giving birth to his son, or, what I've wondered about, (3) that she died as a result of having had her father's idol, because he had said that whoever had it should die, and he was a prophet

--- When had it happened that the discovery of Laban's idol would have been made if it hadn't been already? ** as they are going to leave Shechem and go to Bethel, at God's command, Jacob told them all to cleanse themselves and get rid of all idols

=== Presumably (though we aren't really told this) Laban's idol turns up then, that is, if it hadn't already. Anyway, after they left Bethel is when Rachel died. I wonder if Jacob remembered that he'd told Laban that whoever had the idol would die, then a year or so later found out that Rachel had it, then a short time later when she did die in childbirth, maybe he figured that he'd condemned her to death. I really don't know, though. Again, the NAS and NIV may have been using a different text. So we need to be careful.

*-- Gen. 48:8-9 What question (perhaps rhetorical) does Jacob ask Joseph? ** whom he had with him

=== Though we find out a little later that Isaac was blind, so maybe he just sensed that more than one person (Joseph) was there and really didn't know who they were.

--- Joseph answers that they are his sons; and how does he account for having sons? ** he says that God gave them to him in Egypt

--- Jacob wants his grandsons brought up close to him; why? ** he wants to bless them

*-- Gen. 48:10-11 As Joseph takes his sons up to their grandfather for his blessing, we learn for sure of a physical defect in Jacob; what is it? ** blind from old age

--- Have we heard of anyone else with this trouble? ** yes, Jacob's father Isaac, when he was old (about 135)

--- What did Jacob do? ** kissed and hugged Joseph's sons

--- What grateful statement does Jacob make? ** that he'd never thought to see Joseph alive, and now not only had he seen Joseph but also Joseph's children as well

--- And to Whom does Jacob give credit for this great blessing to himself? ** to God

*-- Gen. 48:12-13 From where did Joseph take his sons then? ** from "between his knees"

=== I think this is probably what gives people the idea that they were small children.

--- From between whose knees does Joseph take them? ** it isn't really clear, but it sounds as if they had been over by Jacob, and he hugged them close, so it seems to me that this means that Joseph had them step back from Jacob

--- Then what did Joseph do? ** bowed with his face to the earth

=== So it sounds as though Joseph had taken his sons up to his father, then had them step back, and then bowed down to his father.

--- Then Joseph presents his sons to his father again; in what way did he do this? ** with the older on his own left and the younger on his own right

--- Then how would they be in relation to Jacob? ** the older (Manasseh) would be on Jacob's right (the place of honor), and the younger (Ephraim) on Jacob's left

*-- Gen. 48:14-16 But what strange thing did Jacob do? ** Jacob put his right hand on the head of the younger son Ephraim and his left hand on the head of the older son Manasseh

--- Did Jacob realize what he was doing? ** yes

--- Why do you say that? ** because he crossed his hands which isn't the natural way to have done it

=== The KJ says he did it "wittingly", that is, "knowingly."

--- Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph; of what did the blessing consist? ** (1) he asked for God to bless them and (2) that they carry on the names of Abraham, Isaac, and himself and (3) that they become a multitude

--- Which God does Jacob want to bless them? ** the God that Abraham and Isaac had worshipped (in Whose way they had walked) and Who had taken care of Jacob all of his life

=== But I had a thought as I was trying to picture this in my mind.

--- What position does Jacob seem to be in here, v. 2? ** sitting up in bed

--- And where did he put his hands? ** on the heads of Joseph's sons

--- And were they tiny boys? ** no, full grown men

--- So could they have been standing in front of him as he put his hands on their heads? ** no

--- What position had Joseph taken in v. 12? ** bowed himself to the ground

=== My guess is that he bowed to the ground and then stayed kneeling before his father.

--- So what position does it seem likely that Ephraim and Manasseh were in as they received their grandfather's blessing? ** probably kneeling before him

=== Again, I don't think this is important of itself, but it gives us a better mental picture of what's probably going on.

*-- Gen. 48:17-18 What was Joseph's reaction to what Jacob was doing? ** he was displeased

--- What displeased Joseph? ** that the younger son was receiving the greater honor by having Jacob's right hand on him

=== This would make the younger of a higher social position than his older brother.

--- Did Joseph keep quiet about this? ** no, he told his father about his "mistake"

--- Then what did Joseph do? ** tried to place Jacob's hands in the "proper" order, the order of birth

*-- Gen. 48:19 But had Jacob known what he was doing or was it just a senile old man not knowing what he did? ** Jacob knew exactly what he'd done

--- Have we heard anywhere else of the younger son getting the greater blessing? ** yes, Jacob himself

--- What difference was there between when the younger son, Jacob, got the blessing and when the younger son, Ephraim, got the blessing? ** Jacob had gotten his by deception but had now given it to Ephraim on purpose

=== One wonders if Jacob were thinking about this as he crossed his hands. Here he was blind, as his father had been, and he was blessing his younger adopted son.

=== Of course, there was also the difference that to our knowledge Manasseh had done nothing wrong, whereas Esau had "despised his birthright." Also, the Lord had prophesied that in Esau's case before his birth that the elder would serve the younger.

=== God was behind this, of course. And there are other times when God chose the younger son.

--- Can you name any? ** Abel (and then Seth) were chosen over the first born Cain, Isaac instead of Ishmael, Joseph and Judah over Reuben, Moses over Aaron, David over his 7 older brothers, even Abraham was younger than at least one of his brothers from the age given for Terah his father

--- What did Jacob say of the future of these 2 grandsons? ** both would be great, but the younger would be the greater

*-- Gen. 48:20 What evidently was a blessing among the Jews at some time or another? ** "May God make you as Ephraim and Manasseh

--- Interestingly, who does Jacob say will use this blessing? ** Israel

--- But who is Israel? ** Jacob himself

--- So what does this mean? ** the Jacob's descendants will use that as a blessing

--- When did Jacob get the name of Israel? ** after wrestling all night with the angel of the Lord just before meeting up with Esau

=== So Jacob is saying that his descendants will be known by his other name, the one the Lord gave him.

--- When we speak of the 2 sons of Joseph, in what order do we say their names? ** Ephraim and Manasseh

--- In Gen. 48:1, what order had they been spoken of? ** Manasseh and Ephraim

--- In Gen. 48:20, what order had they been spoken of? ** Ephraim and Manasseh

--- Again, who was the older? ** Manasseh

=== Up to this point the Bible has spoken of Manasseh and Ephraim, which is the order of birth. From this point on, it will speak of Ephraim and Manasseh.

=== We'll find out as we go along that at first the tribe of Manasseh was larger than the tribe of Ephraim. But that changed in the time of the judges. In fact, after the kingdom split after Solomon, the tribe of Ephraim became the head of the 10 northern tribes, and often they were spoken of as "Ephraim" rather than "Israel." But back to our story here. Jacob has been blessing the two sons of Joseph, placing the younger ahead of the older.

*-- Gen. 48: 21 Jacob has been talking about Joseph's sons; now to whom does he talk directly? ** to Joseph

--- What does Jacob say he himself is going to do? ** die

--- What did Jacob say God would do? ** be with "you" and take "you" out of Egypt

--- Someone with a KJ; is that "you" singular or plural? ** plural

--- So what does it mean here that God would be with "you" and "you" would be taken out of Egypt? ** that God would be with take Jacob's descendants and would take them up out of Egypt after a while

--- Does Jacob really know this? ** yes

--- Why do you say that? ** because of the prophecy to Abraham about their "coming out", and also because they were to inherit the land of Canaan

--- Now could such a great man as Joseph just pick up and leave Egypt with his family and go back to Canaan if he wanted to? ** no

--- Why not? ** because Joseph was Pharaoh's slave, even though he was also Pharaoh's prime minister

*-- Gen. 48:22 What inheritance was Joseph to receive? ** twice what his brother did

--- How might that have been worked out? ** probably in that each of Joseph's 2 sons received a portion and Joseph received none for himself

=== But we like to be able to pass things on to our children, don't we. So Joseph, who probably already had more than he could use, was just giving part of his inheritance to his sons early!

--- Where did Jacob get the things that he was giving double portions of to Joseph? ** from the Amorites by conquest or force

--- So does it sound as if Jacob, while in Canaan, had just quietly lived tending his herds? ** no

=== To me it sounds as if Jacob had done a lot of fighting. Had the Amorites been attacking him and he fought back, taking prizes of war? Had he attacked them because they were attacking him? Had he specifically gone out and attacked the Amorites in order to loot them? I'd doubt it, but we're given no details.

REVIEW:

-- On his deathbed, what does Jacob do about Ephraim and Manasseh? ** adopts them as sons

-- What else? ** blesses the younger son over the older

-- What does he say about Joseph? ** that he'll get one portion more than his brothers

APPLICATION:

** We should save up so we can leave our children an inheritance.

** We see God's hand at work in all of this; He is active in our lives.

** We can leave our possessions to whomever we want to.

** God takes care of us and feeds us.

** We should trust God to do this.

** We should worship God even as we are dying.

Chapter 49: Jacob blesses all of his sons, then dies

-- What was Jacob's physical condition in the last chapter? ** he was very old and sick

-- What did he do? ** adopted Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons and gave them each a portion of his possessions and blessed them

*-- Gen. 49:1-2 Now Jacob feels his death approaching. He has already taken Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons and blessed them; now what does he do? ** he calls all of his sons together

--- By what name does he call himself? ** both Jacob and Israel

--- Why does he want them there? ** to tell them of the future

--- If Jacob could tell the future, what does that make him? ** a prophet

=== This "last days" here doesn't necessarily mean "the end of the world". It means "later" as well. Most of the following prophecies were fulfilled in the next 1700 years (the time left before Christ), in fact, most in about 600 years.

=== The order in which Jacob speaks to his sons is interesting, though I don't see any significance to it. Jacob will be giving the prophecies to his sons, first to Leah's 6 sons (slightly out of order of birth), then Bilhah's firstborn (Rachel's handmaid), then Zilpah's 2 sons, then Bilhah's second son, and lastly to Rachel's 2 sons. I don't know why it is in this order, though it is close to the order of birth. Usually there is a reason for these things, but I don't see it here. But I don't think we need to worry about this! I just mentioned it as interesting, at least to me.

*-- Gen. 48:3-4 About whom does Jacob speak first? ** Reuben

--- Why? ** he is the first born

--- Who was his mother? ** Leah

--- What does the "beginning of my strength" mean? ** the first product of his manhood -- first born

--- What characteristics did Reuben evidently have? ** dignified and powerful, but like boiling water, not steady

--- For what 2 reasons won't Reuben excel? ** (1) he's unstable, and (2) he "went up to his father's bed"

--- To what is Jacob referring? ** in Gen. 35:22 it tells about how Reuben when he was around 23 lay with Bilhah, Jacob's concubine and Rachel's handmaid

=== I wonder if Reuben knew that Jacob had known about this. Had Jacob found out and confronted Reuben at the time? Or had Reuben thought he'd gotten away with it all of this time? We aren't told. At any rate, to have something like that brought up 25 or so years later on a deathbed must have been embarrassing to Reuben whether it had been known before or not!

=== And here is an example of the father's sins being visited on the children. Due to Reuben's sin, when Jacob's descendants became a great nation, Reuben's descendants will not be the rulers. They actually won't amount to much.

=== As Jacob talks to Reuben, I found the pronouns interesting.

--- What pronoun does Jacob use in all but the last sentence? ** the KJ shows us that this is the second person singular, "thou"

=== So he's speaking directly to Reuben.

--- But then what pronoun does he use in the last sentence? ** third person singular, "he"

=== So Jacob starts out by addressing Reuben directly, then it sounds as if he turns to the rest of the brothers and tells them exactly what happened. Again, I wonder if this act had been widely known before then! Had the brothers known about it before this? But we aren't told. However, it is certainly a reproof.

*-- Gen. 48:5-7 To how many of his sons does Jacob now speak? ** to two of them

--- To which two? ** Simeon and Levi

=== It sounds as if Jacob is saying that they are two of a kind.

--- What does Jacob say they have in their houses? ** instruments of cruelty

=== Other translations say "their weapons are implements of violence".

--- Does Jacob want to have a part in their plots and meetings? ** no

--- Why doesn't he? ** because they got mad and killed men

=== The King James says they "digged down a wall". Other translations and the concordance all agree that this is incorrect and should evidently be "hamstrung oxen". The word translated "wall" in the KJ is actually used about 50 other times, always as ox, oxen, bullock, cow, and such like. There is a word for wall that looks very similar to the oxen word.

--- Anyway, to what is Jacob referring? ** the massacre of Shechem 30 years earlier (chap. 34)

--- At the time the massacre happened Jacob wasn't pleased with their act because it would make the people of the land mad at him; has he since changed his mind since then and thought they did right? ** no, he curses their anger here

--- What does the prophet Jacob say will be the future of Simeon and Levi's families (the tribes that will come from them)? ** they will be divided and scattered in Israel

--- Did this come about with the descendants of Levi? ** yes

--- How? ** Levi's descendants became the priestly tribe and had villages here and there in all the various sections of land of the other tribes, but there wasn't an actual section of Canaan for the tribe of Levi

--- Does Jacob mention here that Levi's tribe will become priests? ** no

--- Did Jacob know that Levi's descendants would be priests? ** we aren't told one way or the other

=== I wonder if he would have mentioned if it he'd known it. But again, we don't know. Also, usually the first born became the priest of the family as well as the head of the family. So, again, Reuben lost out on that position.

--- But in this case did the second born get the position of priest? ** no

--- Which did? ** the third born

=== It also says that Simeon's descendants will be scattered. And this happened about 200 years later when the children of Israel settled in the land of Canaan and the most southerly portion went to Simeon. Later they assimilated into Judah.

=== Notice that Simeon and Levi don't get separate prophecies; they are lumped together. But we know that Levi becomes great as the priestly tribe whereas Simeon never amounts to much of anything. I wonder if Simeon is held more responsible for the massacre of Shechem since he was older than Levi. But we aren't told God's reasoning here.

=== So far these blessings haven't been very good, have they?! But now we finally come to something good.

*-- Gen. 49:8-10 Now to whom does Jacob speak? ** to Judah

=== Reuben, the first born, has been passed over as head of the family.

--- Now, what is the head of a country (as the brothers later become) often called? ** the king

--- Why was the first born Reuben passed over? ** he was unstable and had slept with his father's wife

--- Why were the 2nd and 3rd sons, Simeon and Levi, passed over? ** evidently they were too cruel to be good kings

--- So who is next in line? ** Judah, the 4th born

--- Now, I'm wondering if perhaps Jacob had wanted to have made Joseph, his favorite son, become the kingly line; any thoughts on why he doesn't? ** Jacob was a prophet, but a prophet, though powerful, can only do as God allows, and all of these prophecies that Jacob is making are God's plans, not Jacob's

=== And though Jacob is saying them, he may not actually have known how some of them are to be fulfilled.

--- Levi seems to have been too cruel for his descendants to be king, so why then do you think he should be allowed to be head of the priestly tribe? ** of course, we can't really know what God had in mind, but my old preacher who taught the church where I grew up once said that a preacher should be ready to fight and then not to do it. Well, when the descendants of Jacob became a great nation, occasionally there were times when the people were goofing up so badly that unusually severe punishment was needed with no show of compassion -- and Levi's descendants were the ones who were always ready to do it.

--- Can you think of such an incident that will happen about 200 years from this deathbed scene? ** in Ex. 32 at Mt. Sinai when Aaron made the golden calf and Moses found them naked and worshipping it, Moses called for those who were on the Lord's side. The sons of Levi came and at Moses' command went through the camp killing about 3000 of their brothers and cousins.

=== They were ready to serve God and not be squeamish about it.

--- But back to chap. 49, we are talking in these verses about kings; at this time was there a king in Jacob's family? ** no, just the head of the house

--- And who, in concept, was that? ** Jacob

=== We don't know who in reality was the head of the house. Joseph, of course, was the literal ruler of Egypt and, therefore, of his brothers' lives. But among the brothers themselves there were probably natural leaders.

--- Which brother, on an earlier occasion had carried weight with his father? ** Judah

--- When? ** when he finally persuaded Jacob to send Benjamin to Egypt by promising to take care of him, to be responsible for him, himself

--- So now we come to Judah; to what is he compared? ** a lion

--- What is the "king of the beasts"? ** the lion

--- According to this prophecy, what are Judah's brothers going to think of him? ** as worthy of praise

--- Do you remember what the name "Judah" means? ** "praise"

--- Which of Judah's descendants especially will be worthy of praise? ** Jesus

--- How will the prophecy of "father's children bowing to thee" be fulfilled in about 700 years? ** when Judah's descendants are kings

--- How long does this prophecy of Jacob say that the kings of Israel will come from Judah's tribe? ** until Shiloh comes

=== Remember, David, Solomon, and all the kings of the southern kingdom will be descended from Judah.

--- How long does this prophecy of Jacob say that the kings of Israel will come from Judah's tribe? ** until Shiloh comes

--- And what does everyone agree that "Shiloh" is referring to here? ** the Messiah

--- And Who is the Messiah? ** Jesus

--- Which of Jacob's sons was Jesus descended from? ** Judah

--- Why wouldn't the prophecy be for longer than that? ** the Messiah will eventually be king forever

=== Also, the Jews didn't have a king of their own after the kingdom was destroyed and they were carried away captive by Nebuchadnezzar. But David had been promised someone to sit on his throne forever.

=== The words about "putting his hand on the neck on his enemies" means that Judah will triumph over his enemies. "His hand on his neck" refers to someone who is superior to someone else. Conquering kings would do this.

*-- Gen. 49:11-12 Who is this still talking about? ** Judah

--- What do these two verses mean? ** that Judah's family would be rich -- lots of grape vines, wine, and milk

=== My customs book says that milk is a sign of wealth, since wealth was judged by land and agriculture.

*-- Gen. 49:13 Who gets his blessing next? ** Zebulun

=== The sixth son of Leah.

--- What about Zebulun? ** evidently eventually he was to be the sailor tribe; they lived along the Phoenician sea coast and had ports

*-- Gen. 49:14-15 Who is next? ** Issachar

=== He's the fifth son of Leah. Of interest to me is that Zebulun and Issachar are spoken to in reverse order of age. Zebulun was younger than Issachar. I don't know of any significance to this, though.

--- Does Issachar sound like his descendants will have a peaceful or troubled life? ** peaceful

=== In the KJ it says that Issachar was like a donkey crouched down between two burdens, but it actually seems to mean between 2 sheepfolds. One pastor I knew said that in between the cattle pens was a protected spot, and that Issachar's descendants would live in a protected pasture and farm land and just settle down, even though it might mean being under tribute to someone else.

--- All right, we have so far talked about 6 of Jacob's sons; again, what do these 6 have in common? ** the same mother, Leah

*-- Gen. 49:16-18 Now come the 4 sons of the concubines, but in no special order that I can see.

--- Which is the first son of a concubine that is mentioned? ** Dan

=== He's the firstborn of Rachel's handmaid, Bilhah.

--- What does Jacob say Dan will do, v. 16? ** judge his people

--- By the way, do you know who was later a judge of Israel from the tribe of Dan? ** Samson

--- Do any of you remember what the name "Dan" means? ** "Judge" or "judging" or "giving judgement"

=== I heard somewhere that the part about Dan's being like a snake refers to the fact that the tribe of Dan may have introduced idolatry into the land of Canaan as a way of life. However, I don't really know if that is the case.

=== Let's take the last 3 together. They are also the sons of the concubines. The order is the 2 sons of Leah's handmaid Zilpah in order of birth, then the last son of Rachel's handmaid Bilhah.

*-- Gen. 49:19-21 What does it seem to be saying about Gad? ** that his tribe will have trouble with invasions but will fight back well

--- By the way, what does it say will overcome Gad? ** a troop

--- And what does the name "Gad" mean? ** a troop!

--- What about Asher? ** his tribe will live in a land of plenty

=== I don't know if he had especially good pasture lands or just what.

--- And Naphtali? ** it sounds to me as if his descendants are either full of good, solid advise or else they are eloquent

=== It just doesn't say much about the sons of the concubines. Jacob has the most to say about Judah and Joseph.

*-- Gen. 49:22-26 So about whom is Jacob talking now? ** Joseph

--- What might it mean when it talks about the archers shooting at Joseph but his bow stayed strong? ** it seems to me that it refers to the fact that his brothers tried to harm him, but it turned out well; also perhaps this refers to the fact that Joseph stayed righteous and dependable even when young; and it could even be referring to all the troubles even in Egypt that Joseph had had but through which he had remained honest and reliable

--- How does Jacob say that Joseph became strong despite the attempts to hurt him? ** through God

--- In the very last part of v. 26, Jacob says that blessings will come to Joseph "on the head of him that was separate from his brothers"; what does that mean? ** to me it sounds as if Jacob is referring to the fact that Joseph was a good boy when his brothers weren't; however, he was also physically separate from them in that they rejected him

=== All of this must, it seems to me, to have been very embarrassing to his older brothers!

=== But we know more than these verses about Joseph's inheritance, don't we?

--- It doesn't mention anything about the distribution of Jacob's possessions in this chapter, but what about them? ** Joseph would get twice as much as his brothers in that each of his 2 sons would inherit

=== A double portion of inheritance was customarily given to the first born son. So Reuben lost out on this count, also.

*-- Gen. 49:27 Last of all we come to the youngest son, Benjamin.

--- What will be the character of Benjamin's descendants? ** violent warriors

=== The part about the wolf I think may refer to a method of fighting. Wolves have a hit and run type of fighting. We know from the Bible later that there were many good slingers from the tribe of Benjamin, and slingers would be good hit and run fighters.

=== So Jacob finishes blessing each of his sons. Notice that each is given a different blessing except for Simeon and Levi. And he didn't go into much detail to anyone except Reuben, Simeon and Levi, Judah, and Joseph. The first 3 he sort of scolded is why he spoke more to them, but he had a lot of good things to say about Judah and Joseph, and he has given them what would ordinarily have gone to Reuben as first born. Of course, Joseph was Rachel's first born, so that might be considered "fair". But, again, he could only say, only prophecy, what the Lord had decided already.

*-- Gen. 49:28-30 What does it say that Jacob had done for all of his sons? ** blessed them

=== Some of these don't seem particularly like blessings to me, but it says that Jacob had blessed them, so we'll let it go at that.

--- By the way, what does it call those that Jacob blessed in v. 28? ** tribes

--- What does Jacob now command his sons to do? ** to bury him in Canaan in the Cave of Macpelah

--- Had this been brought up before? ** yes

--- When (47:29-30)? ** when he'd talked to Joseph separately earlier

--- How did Jacob come to possess this grave? ** he'd inherited it from his father Isaac who had inherited it from his father Abraham

--- How had Abraham gotten it? ** he'd bought it for a grave for his wife Sarah

*-- Gen. 49:31-32 Who was already buried in the cave of Machpelah? ** Abraham, Sarah, Isaac,

Rebekah, and Leah

--- Is Rachel buried there, too? ** no

--- How do you know? ** because she died in childbirth outside of Bethlehem and was buried there (35:19)

=== So, though Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah and Rachel had his main attention during about 14 or 15 years of marriage, Leah was his main wife for at least 30 years and now "has" him in death. (I get the 30 from the fact that Rachel died when Benjamin was born, that Benjamin was about 30 when they all entered Egypt, and Leah had to have died some time in Egypt.)

--- Why do I say that Leah had to have died after Jacob had come down into Egypt? ** it isn't mentioned, but it had to have been afterwards, otherwise the prophecy that Joseph's father and mother would bow to him (37:9-10) could not have been fulfilled

=== So it seems to me that Joseph would have had to have arranged to take Leah back for burial, too. But we're told nothing about that in the Bible.

=== Notice that it doesn't mention anything about the concubines and where they were buried. They were rated as second-class wives, so they had some honor. Remember, they were introduced to Esau. But they weren't buried in the cave of MachPelah. Of course, there is a good possibility that they were still alive at this time. After all, Jacob was in his 90s when he married, and they were probably close to 70 years younger than Jacob!

*-- Gen. 49:33 What did Jacob do as he finished blessing his sons and prophesying about them and telling them where to bury him? ** he lay back on the bed and died

=== This is the close of the era where God gives his covenant to just one man with the promise of multitudes of descendants. At this point God has his chosen family down in Egypt where He will now form them into a mighty nation. From now on God deals not with one man, but with one nation which is made up of the tribes that will come from Jacob's 12 sons. God constantly refers to Himself in the Bible as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and as the God of Israel (the nation).

REVIEW:

-- What were usually the blessings of the first born? ** (1) ruler of the family, (2) priest for the family, and (3) a double portion of the inheritance.

-- Who was Jacob's first born? ** Reuben

-- Did Reuben get these customary blessings? ** no

-- How were they given? ** they were divided up between (1) Judah, (2) Levi, and (3) Joseph

-- Did Jacob give out each of these 3 things himself ** no, he only mentions kings coming from Judah and Joseph's getting the double inheritance. He doesn't mention the priestly part at all.

-- Then how did Levi later get to be the priestly tribe? ** God just made it that way

-- So what special thing did the first born Reuben get? ** nothing

-- After blessing his sons, what is Jacob's only remaining concern? ** that they be sure to bury him in the cave of Macpelah

-- Who else was buried there? ** Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Leah

-- Then what happened? ** Jacob died

-- How old was he? ** 147

-- How long had he been in Egypt? ** 17 years

APPLICATIONS:

** God has plans and He carries them out in His way.
** What we do now can affect our descendants later.
** What goes around, comes around!
** There are consequences for our actions.

Chapter 50: Burial of Jacob; Death of Joseph

-- What happened at the end of the last chapter? ** Jacob died

*-- Gen. 50:1-3 What natural reaction from Joseph at his beloved father's death? ** he fell on him, kissed him, and cried

--- What did Joseph do next? ** ordered the doctors to embalm Jacob

=== My customs books says that the doctors of Egypt weren't general practitioners but were specialists. Also, they were of the priestly class. The ones who did the embalming were a lower class, though they were still specialists.

--- Jacob was a Hebrew and the Hebrews didn't embalm, so why would Joseph want to embalm his Hebrew father? ** perhaps just to show respect there in Egypt, but also because he was going to be taking the body up out of Egypt to bury it in the Cave of Machpelah in Canaan which would take about a month

=== The corpse would be mighty "ripe" if they didn't embalm it.

--- How long did the embalming process last? ** 40 days

=== The embalming actually did take this long. It was a long, grisly process of removing organs and packing body cavities with spices and soaking the body in something called niter. It soaked in this for a long time; different people say different times, 30 days, 40 days, and 70 days. Then the body was wrapped in 600 - 700 feet of about 7 inch wide bandages and seems to have been heated someway. Then it is wrapped again with lime soaked bandages and allowed to dry, then decorated. After that it is put into a wooden case or sometimes a stone one.

--- Who mourned for Jacob? ** the Egyptians

--- Why do you think that the Egyptians mourned for this foreign man? ** he was the father of the prime minister, so it was good manners for the whole country to go into mourning

--- How long did they mourn? ** 70 days

=== The mourning period was also during the embalming period, not in addition to it. My book says that this long period of mourning was an honor, that this was almost the amount of time allowed for a king. Also, depending on the embalming, the entire process may possibly take this long.

*-- Gen. 50:4-5 Who did Joseph approach after the 70 days of mourning was past? ** Pharaoh's servants

--- Why? ** he wanted them to tell Pharaoh something

=== We aren't told why Joseph didn't just approach Pharaoh directly, but my Bible custom's book had what sounds like a likely reason. Remember when Joseph was first taken out of prison to interpret Pharaoh's dream? He shaved first. Well, it was the custom among the Egyptians to be shaved at all times. Then in time of mourning they let their hair and beards grow. In this condition they weren't fit to stand before the king. This sounds like a likely reason, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about it, and I don't think the reason is a big issue here.

--- What did Joseph want them to ask Pharaoh? ** if he could leave Egypt for a while in order to bury Jacob in Canaan

--- But Joseph was the second in the kingdom; why would he need permission to do this? ** because he was still a servant of the king; also it would have been good manners if nothing else

*-- Gen. 50:6-9 What did Pharaoh think of this idea? ** he wanted Joseph to keep his word

--- Who went to bury Jacob besides Joseph? ** his brothers and their families, Pharaoh's servants, the chief men of his household and the leaders of Egypt

=== In our day at the funeral of some noted person, representatives of other countries will attend.

--- Did any of Jacob's family stay home? ** yes, the children

--- What protection did the funeral procession have along? ** an honor guard of chariots and cavalry

=== This would have been quite an impressive sight!

*-- Gen. 50:10-11 What did this impressive funeral procession do as it was reaching Canaan? ** stopped at a threshingfloor and mourned for 7 days

--- What is a threshingfloor? ** it wasn't a wooden structure; it was a smooth, hard, bare, clean, flat, circular piece of ground from 50 to 100 feet in diameter, in the open air and on elevated ground and was where grain was taken to be threshed

--- Was this a subdued mourning? ** evidently not, as it impressed the Canaanites so much that they renamed the place Abel-mizraim

--- What does Abel-mizraim mean? ** "the mourning of the Egyptians"

=== No one seems to be sure just where this was. But it sounds as if it were east of the Jordan River, just before they entered Canaan.

*-- Gen. 50:12-13 Did the brother's carry out their father's dying wish? ** yes

--- And what was that? ** that they bury him in the Cave of Machpelah

--- Who also did we say were buried there? ** Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Leah

*-- Gen. 50:14 What did Joseph and his brothers do after burying Jacob? ** they went back to Egypt

=== Now we come to a very interesting, human interest part.

*-- Gen. 50:15 What fear had Joseph's brothers been carrying around with them? ** the fear that after their father was dead, Joseph would want to get even with them for having mistreated him

--- How long had they been worrying about this? ** 17 years!

--- And how do we get this figure? ** Jacob was 130 when he entered Egypt and 147 when he died

=== Just a little better picture of things that we can get by noticing little details.

*-- Gen. 50:16-17 How did the brothers approach Joseph? ** they sent a messenger

--- What was the messenger to say to Joseph? ** that their father Jacob had, before his death, commanded them to go to Joseph and ask his forgiveness for the wrong they had done to him

--- Had Jacob actually told them to do this? ** we don't really know, since the Bible doesn't say

=== There are differences of opinion on this. Some people think they were lying. But if I had to make a decision on this (which I don't!), I'd be tempted to say that Jacob had actually told them this. My feeling would be that the brothers had had enough of deception and lies. But, again, we aren't told one way or the other.

=== It sounds as if maybe they had never actually asked forgiveness before for this. Perhaps they had been too embarrassed to bring it right out in the open.

--- How did Joseph take it when he received their messenger? ** he wept

--- We aren't told, but what might have been a reason for his crying? ** perhaps he realized they had been worrying all of those years over something that he'd long before forgiven and this just made him very sad

=== It sounds as if Joseph had a truly forgiving, loving nature.

--- And, again, how long had they been worried about Joseph's actions when their father should die? ** 17 years

=== Imagine worrying for 17 years about something that had no basis for worry.

--- Why might they have figured Joseph would, about 39 years after they had sold him into slavery, try to get even now if he hadn't done so earlier? ** they might have thought that he was just waiting until their father was dead so as not to grieve their father

--- The brothers refer to themselves in 2 ways in v. 17 in this supposed message from their father; what do they call themselves? ** (1) his brothers, and (2) the servants of the God of his father

--- Is that "father" singular or plural? ** singular

=== So they're reminding him of his father whom he'd just buried. And remember, they'd said their father had requested them to ask this forgiveness. Also, they're reminding him that they are his brothers.

*-- Gen. 50:18 Did the brothers leave this unpleasant task of asking forgiveness solely up to the messenger? ** no, they also went in person

--- What did they say to him? ** that they were his slaves

=== This may have been a polite way of asking forgiveness, or they may have figured this was the sensible way to approach him. You know, throwing themselves onto his mercy.

*-- Gen. 50:19-21 How did Joseph take their appeals ** he reassured them that he would hold no grudge

--- How does Joseph point out that he shouldn't hold their evil acts against them? ** he said that he wasn't in God's place, that this had all been God's plan to save them, and who would he be to speak against God's plan

--- Joseph had taken care of them during the great famine; how long had it been since the great famine had ended? ** about 12 years

=== Remember, they had come to Egypt when the famine had only been going on for 2 years (45:6), so they were there for 5 years of the famine. And then Jacob had lived a total of 17 years in Egypt. (17 - 5 = 12)

--- Does it seem that Joseph has any power anymore now that the hard times are over for the country? ** yes

--- Why do you say that? ** because he reassured them that he would continue taking care of them

*-- Gen. 50:22-23 Did Joseph go back to Canaan to live? ** no, he stayed in Egypt

--- How old did he live to be? ** 110

--- How far down in the line of his descendants did Joseph live to see? ** his great-grandchildren

--- What might Joseph have thought of as he saw these generations being born? ** about how God had said that He would take them out in the 4th generation

=== Machir was the son of Manasseh. From what is said later, it seems to be that Machir might still have been alive when the children of Israel left Egypt with Moses, though I wouldn't be dogmatic about that.

--- Just for fun, let's see if we can figure out how many years were there between v. 21 and 22; that is, how many years between the death of Jacob and the death of Joseph? ** Joseph lived to be 110 years old. He was 39 when Jacob entered Egypt at age 130, and Jacob lived in Egypt for 17 years until he died, making Joseph 56 (39+17=56) when Jacob died. Joseph died at age 110. So 110-56=54 years between the death of Jacob and Joseph, or 54 years between verses 21 and 22!

=== I don't think this is at all important, but I think it does give us a better picture of what actually happened. Also, it again shows what we can get from the seemingly little, unimportant details given in the Bible. I think God put them there for a reason.

*-- Gen. 50:24-26 What time approached? ** the time for Joseph to die

--- To whom does Joseph talk about his coming death? ** to his brothers

=== We know for sure that at least one of his actual brothers out-lived him, as Levi was about 2 years older than Joseph and Levi lived to be 137 years old (Ex. 6:16). So Levi lived about 25 years longer than Joseph. We aren't told the ages of the other brothers. However, it stands to reason that perhaps Joseph died sooner than many of the brothers because they were living healthy outdoor lives, whereas Joseph was living the possibly stressful life of a politician or administrator.

--- Of what promise does the dying Joseph remind his brothers? ** that God had said that He would take them back to the land of Canaan

--- What did Joseph then ask his brothers to swear to? ** that they would take his bones with them when they left Egypt

--- So what reminder of the promise of God does Joseph leave his brothers and their children? ** his embalmed body in a coffin which would be ready to be taken out of Egypt when God returned them to Canaan

--- Again, how old did Joseph live to be? ** 110

=== We will go into it in detail as we start Exodus, but I'll just mention here that when Joseph died, there would be a gap of about 65-80 years and then Moses would be born.

REVIEW:

-- What event opens this chapter? ** the death of Jacob

-- What happens after he dies? ** he is embalmed and then taken back to Canaan & buried in the Cave of Machpelah.

-- Who else was buried there? ** Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, & Leah

-- What happened after they all return to Egypt? ** the brothers, who've been worrying about Joseph's taking revenge on them after their father's death, beg for mercy from him

-- How did Joseph respond? ** wept and told them that God had sent him down to save them during the famine

-- Whose is the last death that we hear of in the book of Genesis? ** Joseph's

-- What promise does Joseph extract from his brothers? ** that they'll take his body back out of Egypt into Canaan when God fulfills His promise to return them to Canaan.

APPLICATIONS:

** Forgive those who have done evil against us.

** God fulfills His plans for our good, using even the bad acts of others

** Ask forgiveness from those whom we have offended

** It is all right to mourn for our dead, but we should do it as those who have hope, not as pagans without hope.

Reviews, Both the Short and the Long Forms!

The Short Form: A Very Quick Review of Genesis

=== So we have completed the book of Genesis. It is a very important book. It tells us the history first of mankind and then of the beginnings of the Jewish nation through which the Saviour would someday come. It is the basis for history. Let's very quickly (only about a dozen questions) review the entire book.

--- About how many years does Genesis cover? ** about 2400 years

--- About what percentage of man's history so far is covered by the book of Genesis? ** a little over a third

--- How long did it take for Creation? ** 6 days then a day of rest

--- Who were the first people? ** Adam and Eve

--- Where did they live at first? ** in the Garden of Eden

--- Why did they have to leave this? ** because of their disobedience in eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they could no longer have access to the tree of life (God had said they would die if they ate from the forbidden tree)

--- Who was the first murderer? ** Cain

--- What was life after the Fall but before the Flood like? ** very civilized: cities, tent dwellers, musicians, farmers, herders, metal workers

--- From which son of Adam was Noah descended? ** Shem

--- About how many years after Creation was the Flood? ** about 1650 years

--- How many people were left after the Flood and who were they? ** 8: Noah and his wife and his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth and their wives

--- What did God instruct these 8 people, what covenant with them after they came off the ark? ** murderers were to be killed, they could eat anything they wanted to except they weren't to eat blood, and that there would never again be a world wide flood

--- What sign do we still have today that remembers this promise that the Lord made about there never being a world wide flood again? ** the rainbow

--- The Bible at this point is going to concentrate on the family of just one of the sons of Noah; which one and why? ** Shem, because from him will come the Jews through whom God will reveal Himself and then the Messiah Jesus Who will bring eternal life

--- All nations came from these 3 sons of Noah, but what was the big event between the Flood and Abraham? ** the Tower of Babel

--- About how long after the Flood was Abraham? ** 400 years

--- What is the gist of the covenants that the Lord made with Abraham and his son and grandson? ** that he would become a great nation with numberless descendants; they would inherit the land of Canaan forever; those who blessed him the Lord would bless and those who cursed him the Lord would curse; and all nations would be blessed through him

--- What 4 people is about 3/4 of the book of Genesis about? ** Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph

--- What is Jacob's other name? ** Israel

--- How did he get that name? ** the Lord gave it to him after wrestling all night with him

--- Why did Jacob take his family to Egypt? ** because Joseph would take care of them there during the famine

--- What is the last event in Genesis? ** Joseph's bones waiting in a sepulchre in Egypt

--- What promise of God is then waiting to be fulfilled? ** for the descendants of Jacob to be taken back to the land of Canaan, the Promised Land "in the 4th generation"

--- From which of those sons of Jacob will Jesus, the Son of God come in His human form? ** Judah

=== Now let's make a quick chart of all of this.

Write the names in a vertical line as you say them. There is a chart of this both at the end of this lesson and at the end of this booklet in Teacher Helps. There is also a very abbreviated chart of this at the end of this lesson.

--- Who was the first man? ** Adam

--- Which son of Adam became the godly line? ** Seth

--- Which descendant of Seth later became the only righteous man on earth? ** Noah

--- Noah had 3 sons and went through the Flood; which son are we only concerned with in the Bible? ** Shem

--- The Tower of Babel followed, and who of importance comes next? ** Abraham

--- Who was Abraham's father and how many children do we know that he had? ** Terah, 4

--- Who are they? ** Abraham, Sarah, Haran, and Nahor

--- Just as a matter of interest, what is the name of Haran's son? ** Lot

-- And who are Lot's sons by his daughters? ** Ammon and Moab

--- Abraham had 8 sons, but who are the only 2 we hear much about? ** Ishmael and Isaac

--- Though we do hear about the descendants of one of Keturah's sons; which one? ** Midian

=== Those are the Midianites who bought Joseph and who later cause so much trouble from time to time with the children of Israel in Canaan

--- But who is the only one son of Abraham that we're really concerned with? ** Isaac

--- Isaac had 2 sons; what were their names? ** Esau and Jacob

--- But which is the only one we're really concerned with? ** Jacob

--- How many wives did Jacob have? ** 4

--- And how many children? ** 13; 12 sons and 1 daughter

=== Let's make a little chart here listing Jacob's wives with their children's names under them (Gen. 29:31:-35; 30:4-8; 30:10-13; 30:17-21; 30:22-24; 35:16-18)

=== The children of Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah

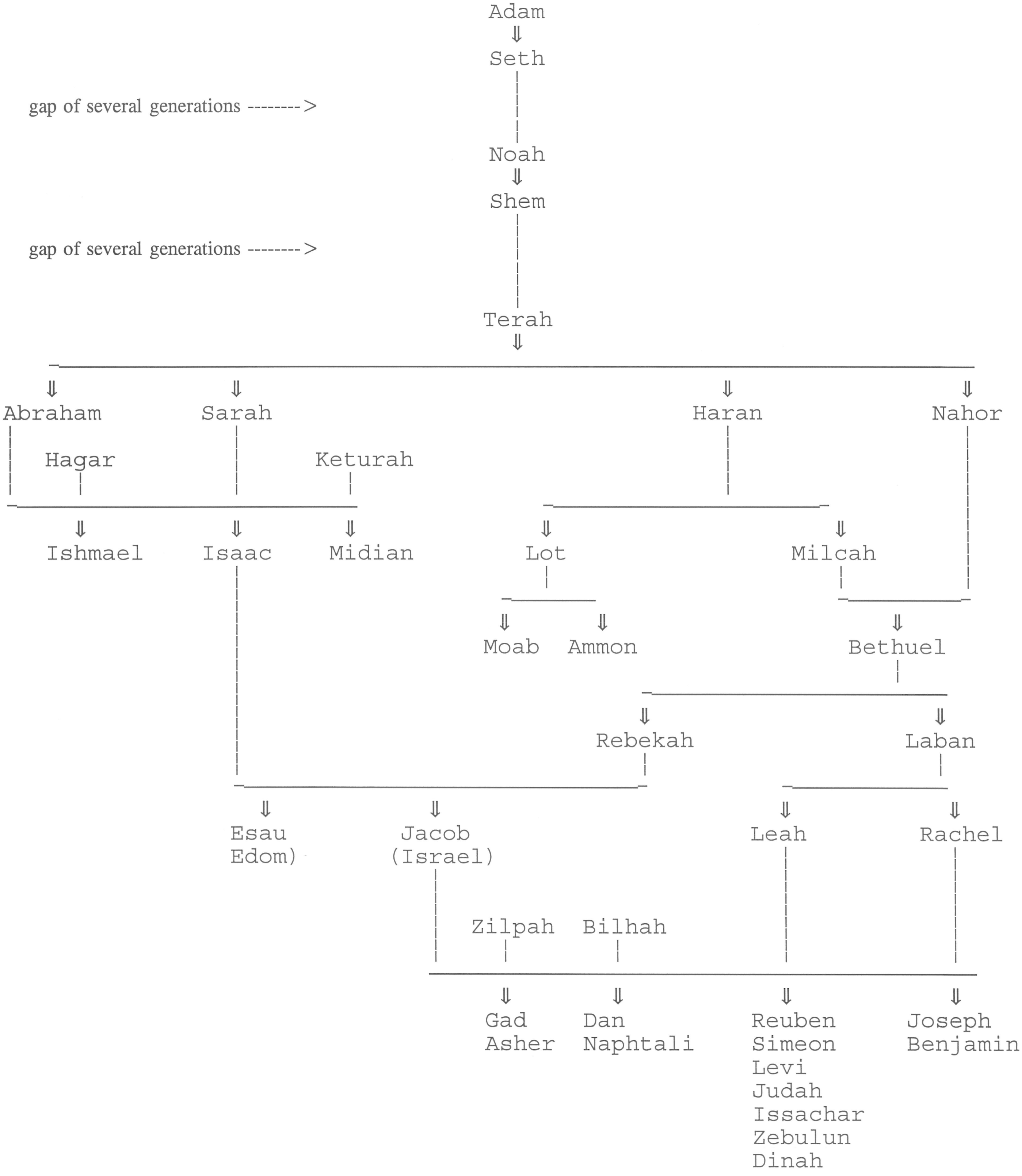
=== The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin

=== The sons of Bilhah (Rachel's handmaid): Dan and Naphtali

=== The sons of Zilpah: Gad and Asher

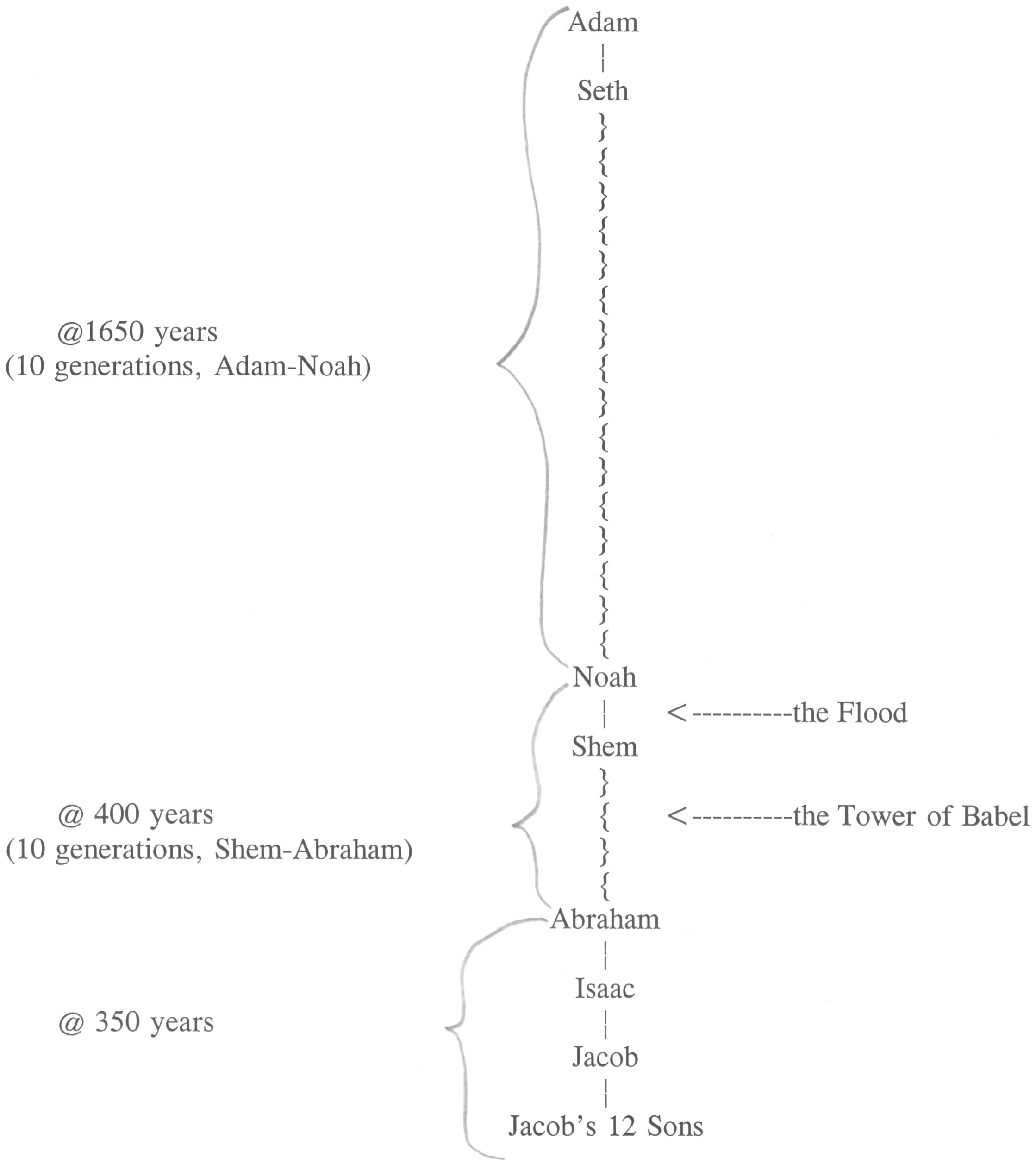
You can just stop here with lessons on Genesis. However, on the following pages is an additional review that can be used as an entire lesson if you want to. (I skipped it, feeling that the short version was enough.) Also, there is a copy of this extensive review written up as a "test" both on the book of Genesis and the introductory lessons, and if you want to, you may xerox it and give each person a copy to fill in. The answers follow the "test". I have added some questions, hence the weird numbering in places! Again, you can just skip this if you want to (I did). I rather doubt if anyone would "take the test", but it's there if you should want it.

CHART: INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF TERAH'S DESCENDANTS


Adam
Seth
gap of several generations -------->
Noah
Shem
gap of several generations -------->
Terah
Abraham
Sarah
Haran
Nahor
Hagar
Keturah
Ishmael
Isaac
Midian
Lot
Milcah
Moab
Ammon
Bethuel
Rebekah
Laban
Esau
Edom)
Jacob
(Israel)
Leah
Rachel
Zilpah
Bilhah
Gad
Asher
Dan
Naphtali
Reuben
Simeon
Levi
Judah
Issachar
Zebulun
Dinah
Joseph
Benjamin

⇓ a direct *father to child* relationship without gaps

Chart: A Very Quick Visual Overview of the Genesis Genealogy


Adam
Seth
@1650 years
(10 generations, Adam-Noah)
Noah
<----------the Flood
Shem
<----------the Tower of Babel
@ 400 years
(10 generations, Shem-Abraham)
Abraham
Isaac
@ 350 years
Jacob
Jacob's 12 Sons

| = one generation
} = more than one generation

The Long Form: Lesson Reviewing All of Genesis and Introductory Material

This may be skipped entirely, but I'm including it just in case you want it. There is also in a test form of this lesson following the lesson. Also, just in case you want it. I didn't use either of these after all of this work! I figured the short review was enough!

=== I thought that today we'd review the entire book of Genesis. It is the base on which the rest of the Bible stands. First, though, we're going to do a brief review of how the Bible is put together and of the timeline.

Copies of these are in the Teacher Helps at the end of these lessons.

--- What are the 2 major parts of the Bible? ** the Old and New Testaments

--- Into how many parts are these 2 major parts divided? ** 3 parts each

--- How is the Old Testament divided up? ** history, poetry, and prophecy

--- How did they decide the order in which to put the books of the Historical section of the Old Testament? ** they placed them in chronological order

--- Into what 2 parts is the prophecy section divided up? ** into major and minor prophets

=== Remember, these are major and minor pretty much by size.

--- In what order are these major and minor prophets placed? ** in chronological order

=== We should remember that the Jewish Bible is in a slightly different order.

--- How Is the New Testament divided up? ** history, letters (epistles), and prophecy

--- And how is the epistle (letter) section divided? ** into Paul's letters and the letters by everyone else

--- And into what order are Paul's letters placed? ** by size, also to churches and then to individuals

--- And into what order are the rest of the letters placed? ** by size

=== Let's look at our timeline just for a quick over-view of the history of the Old Testament. It starts with the book of Genesis.

--- About how long a period of time does the book of Genesis take? ** about 2400 years

=== Then after Genesis it has various "periods."

--- After Genesis comes which Period and about how long is it? ** the Period of the Judges, about 500 years

--- Then which Period after that and about how long is it? ** the Period of the Kings, about 500 years

--- Then which Period after the kings? ** the Babylonian captivity, the Exile

--- About how long of a gap, after what are called the silent years, comes before the New Testament? ** about 400 years

--- Now, about how many years have there been so far in the history of mankind? ** about 6000

--- Into what 2 periods do we divide this 6000 years? ** B.C. and A.D.

--- Whose name makes this division? ** Christ's, when He was on earth

--- About how long is each period? ** B.C. is about 4000 years, and A.D. is about 2000 years

=== We used 4 names to remember more or less when various people came and events occurred in the Old Testament. Remember, if you can remember these 4 names and a little about a certain person or event, you can pretty much place when it was.

--- Whose name divides the Old Testament neatly in half at the 2000 B.C. year mark? ** Abraham's

--- Then who came about 500 years after Abraham at the 1500 B.C. year mark? ** Moses

=== So Isaac and Jacob and his 12 sons all come during those years between Abraham and Moses, don't they?

--- Then who came, what name do we use, about 500 years after Moses at the 1000 B.C. year mark? ** David

=== So all of the judges of Israel like Joshua and Samson and Samuel and then the first king Saul all come during those years between Moses and David, don't they?

--- And then who came about 500 years after David at the 500 B.C. year mark? ** Daniel's

=== So Solomon and all of the kings of divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Nebuchadnezzar and all of the major prophets and most of the minor prophets all come between those years between David and Daniel, don't they? See how we can more or less figure when people and events were?

=== And then, of course, Ezra and Nehemiah and Esther and the rest of the minor prophets would all come after Daniel or about 400-500 B.C. These are approximate dates, but they let us hang Bible people and events in more or less the proper time.

--- Again, about how many years are there between Creation and the beginning of the New Testament? ** 4000 years

--- And about how many years does the New Testament cover? ** about 90 years

--- About how many of those Old Testament years are covered only by the one book of Genesis? ** about 2400 years

=== Again, we can see the importance of the book of Genesis. So now let's review Genesis.

--- How long did it take God to create everything? (Gen. 1:4, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:1-2)? ** 6 literal days then He rested the seventh

--- God made Adam, then why did God say He made Eve? (Gen. 2:18)? ** because "it wasn't good for man to be alone"

--- Where did Adam and Eve live at first? ** in the Garden of Eden

--- Who named the animals and when (Gen. 2:19-20)? ** Adam did, evidently before the making of Eve on that 6th day

--- Why did Adam and Eve leave the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:17, 22, 24)? ** because now that they had disobeyed God by eating of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, they were sinful. God had promised them that if they ate of that tree that they would die. But if they stayed in the Garden of Eden, they would eat of the Tree of Life and live forever. Therefore, they had to leave in order for what God said to come to pass.

=== So they left the Garden of Eden and then began having children.

--- Who were their first 2 children? ** Cain and Abel

--- Why was Abel's sacrifice acceptable to God and Cain's wasn't (Hint: This is tricky; check Hebrews 11:4)? ** because Abel offered his sacrifice by faith and Cain had no faith

--- And what terrible thing did Cain do? ** killed his brother Abel

=== Now for the question that unbelieving people love to ask and think they have stumped us!

--- Where did Cain get his wife? ** it's obvious; he married either his sister or his niece!

=== So mankind began settling down and having lots of children.

--- Were the men before the flood just a bunch of grunting cavemen (Gen. 4:2, 17, 20-22)? ** no

--- Tell me a little about the pre-Flood civilization from what it says in Gen. 4:20-22? ** there were iron workers, smelters, combining of metals (brass), ironworkers; there were musicians of stringed and wind instruments; there were cattlemen and tent makers; from Gen. 4:2, we know that there were farmers, and from Gen. 4:17, we knew there were city dwellers.

--- How many generations are there from Adam to Noah (Gen. 5:1-29)? ** 10 generations

--- What interesting and unique event is told about Enoch (Gen. 5:22)? ** that he never died but was taken up to Heaven

--- Which man listed (Gen. 5) lived the longest number of years? ** Methuselah (969 years)

-- Who was Noah's father? (Gen. 5:28-29) ** Lamech

=== Then mankind began getting more and more wicked. So then the next big event in the Bible is the Flood.

--- How did Noah know how to build the ark (Gen. 6:13-16)? ** God told him how

--- How long did it rain when the flood came (Gen. 7:4)? ** 40 days and nights

--- How many people were in the ark and who were they? (Gen. 7:7) ** 8 people: Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, and their respective wives

--- How long were they in the ark (I told you this and it can be figured from Noah's age, but don't worry if you don't get it!) (Gen. 7:9-11; Gen. 8:14)? ** They were 1 year and 17 days total in the ark; but only 1 yr, 10 days from the coming of the rains until they left the ark, since they were in the ark a week before the rain came

--- What did Noah do the first thing after leaving the ark (Gen. 8:20)? ** sacrificed one of every clean animal and of every clean bird (the "7th" animal or bird)

--- All of mankind was now in one spot just outside of the ark, and what did God tell them they could eat (Gen. 9:3)? ** plants and every moving thing that lives

--- What did God tell all mankind they could not eat (Gen. 9:4)? ** not the meat with blood.

--- Why not (Gen. 9:4)? ** "the life was in it"

--- What did God tell Noah should be done to murderers (Gen. 9:5-6)? ** they were to be killed

--- Why (Gen. 9:6)? ** because man was made in the image of God

=== And remember, God was talking to all of mankind. So I think these about not eating blood and killing murderers are still valid today. Of course, we don't just run out and kill a murderer ourselves now; it's done through the government

--- What did God tell Noah that He would never do again (Gen. (9:11, 15)? ** there would never be a flood over all of the world again nor would all people killed by a flood again

--- What sign did God give that we today may know that God remembers this promise to Noah (Gen. 9:13)? ** the rainbow

--- Now, about how many years between the Flood and Abraham? ** about 400 years

--- What big event that happened between the Flood and Abraham are we told about and how does it affect us even today (Gen. 11:1-9?) ** the Tower of Babel; today people speak different languages and have trouble communicating.

--- Who was Abraham's wife (Gen. 11:31)? ** Sarah (earlier called Sarai)

--- What relationship was she to Abraham besides his wife (Gen. 20:12)? ** his half-sister

--- Why did Abraham go to the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1)? ** God told him to

--- Did Abraham have any reason to believe that he might ever have children (Gen. 15:13-18)? ** yes

--- Why? ** because God told him he would

--- Whose idea was it for Abraham to take a second wife (Gen. 16:1,2)? ** Sarah's

--- Why was this idea suggested (Gen. 16:1)? ** because Abraham was to have children, but Sarah was barren

--- What was the name of Abraham's second wife (Gen 16:3)? ** Hagar

--- What was the name of his son by her? ** Ishmael

--- How old was Abraham at the time (Gen 16:15, 16)? ** 86

--- Then 13 years later, what surprising promise did God have for Abraham (Gen. 17:19)? ** that Abraham would have a son by Sarah

--- How could Sarah know that this would really happen (Gen. 18:1, 10-14)? ** because the Lord and 2 angels came to their tent and ate there, and the Lord not only told this again, but He told Sarah she had laughed and repeated the promise

--- What judgment of God was Abraham told about by God at that time also, (Gen. 18:16-22)? ** about the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

--- Why would this especially worry Abraham (Gen. 12:10-11 and Gen. 19:1)? ** because of Lot who lived there

--- Who was Lot (Gen. 12:5)? ** Abraham's nephew

=== Well, Abraham tried bargaining with the Lord so that Sodom wouldn't be destroyed if there were 10 righteous men there. But, obviously, there weren't, as it was destroyed. But Lot and his 2 daughters were able to flee and ended up in a cave in the mountains. His daughters were worried that their father's name wouldn't be carried on so they got him drunk and had sons by him

--- What were the names of Lot's sons by his daughters (Gen. 19:37-38)? ** Ammon and Moab

--- About a year later Sarah had her son; what was the name of the son of Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 21:3)? ** Isaac

--- What does his name mean and why (Gen. 17:19, Gen. 18: 12-13)? ** the Lord told them to name him that which means "Laughter" because both Abraham and Sarah had laughed when told they'd have a son in their old age

--- What other reason for his name from what Sarah said at his birth (Gen. 21:6,7)? ** because she was so happy and others would laugh and be happy with her

=== Isaac grew up and his mother died and Abraham was worried about a wife for Isaac. But first one more thing about Abraham.

--- Who did Abraham marry after Sarah died? ** Keturah

--- Did she have any children? ** yes, 6 sons

--- Which is the only one we ever really hear about? ** Midian

--- How did Isaac get a wife (Gen. 24)? ** a trusted servant was sent up to Abraham's brother's family in Haran to get a wife for Isaac

--- Was she related to Isaac (Gen. 22:20; Gen. 24:24)? ** yes, a first cousin

--- How old was Isaac when he got married and how old was he when he became a father (Gen. 25:20, 26)? ** 40 when he married, 60 when he became a father

--- What are the names of Isaac's sons (Gen. 25:24-26)? ** Jacob and Esau

--- God said (Gen.25:23) that one son would be predominant; which one? ** the younger one, Jacob

--- As a review, name the 3 generations (father, son, and grandson) that we have just been talking about in questions 39-58. God calls Himself the God of these 3 men. ** Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

--- How did Esau lose his birthright (Gen. 25:29-34)? ** he came in hungry and sold it to Jacob for a mess of red pottage

--- What name did he get from this (Gen. 25:30)? ** Edom, meaning "red"

--- How did Esau, in addition, lose his blessing (Gen. 27:1-40)? ** Isaac was tricked by Jacob who, at his mother's instigation, gave his blind father Isaac a goat stew before Esau got back for hunting for deer.

--- What was Esau's reaction to losing the blessing (Gen. 27:41)? ** he planned on killing Jacob as soon as their father died

--- Why did Jacob leave his family (Gen.27:42-45)? ** so his brother would have time to cool down and not kill him when their father died

--- What reason for leaving did his mother use (Gen. 27:46 - Gen. 28:4)? ** that she couldn't stand Esau's Canaanite wives and wanted Jacob to get a wife from among her relatives

--- What interesting, special dream did Jacob have on the journey (Gen. 28:11-15)? ** he dreamed that God was on top of a ramp leading from Heaven to earth and angels were walking up and down and God promised to give the land Jacob was on to Jacob's descendants and to be with Jacob and to bring Jacob back home again

--- Where was Jacob at this time and what did he rename the place? ** at Luz, he renamed it Bethel (House of God)

--- What was the name of Jacob's uncle (Gen. 28:2)? ** Laban

--- What were the names of Laban's daughters? ** Rachel and Leah

--- Tell what happened at Jacob's wedding (Gen. 29:15-25)? ** he got the wrong bride!

--- What did dear Uncle Laban give as a reason for this and how did he propose to remedy it (Gen. 29:25-28)? ** the older girl in a family had to marry before her younger sister could, so Jacob could just marry Rachel in a week and then work for her for additional 7 years

--- Did Jacob end up with any more wives? ** yes

--- Why (Gen. 30:1-4, 9)? ** as each sister couldn't bear children (Rachel at first, then Leah after having 4 sons), she gave her maidservant to Jacob as a wife to bear children for her

--- What were their names? ** Bilhah and Zilpah

--- How many children did Jacob have by these 4 wives? ** 12 sons and 1 daughter

--- Why did Jacob take his family and leave his Uncle Laban's (Gen. 30:42 - 31:1-2)? ** Jacob was getting rich in herds, and his cousins were getting jealous, and it seems that even Laban was beginning to look unfavorably on Jacob

--- Was it alright by God that Jacob left? (Gen. 32:3)? ** yes, in fact, God appeared to him in a vision and told him he could go

--- Why wasn't there a big send-off by Laban for his daughters, grandchildren and his nephew Jacob (Gen. 31:19-21)? ** Jacob sneaked off when Uncle Laban was away shearing sheep because he was afraid that Laban would stop him and take Leah and Rachel and the children

--- Just a matter of your opinion here. Does this sound like a sensible act of Jacob, considering his uncle's past behavior (consult Gen. 31:41) ** yes, his uncle had not dealt honestly with him in the past, changing his wages as he went

--- How long had Jacob been with his Uncle Laban (Gen. 31:38)? ** 20 years

--- How did Jacob feel about meeting his brother Esau after all this time (Gen. 32:3-7)? ** apprehensive

--- What event took place the night before Jacob met Esau (Gen. 32:24-32)? ** a "man" came and wrestled all night with Jacob

--- What new name was Jacob given and by whom (Gen. 32:28)? ** the Lord renamed Jacob "Israel"

--- Was the meeting between the twins Jacob and Esau peaceable (Gen. 33:1-4)? ** yes

--- What terrible event took place after Jacob and his family settled in Canaan (Gen. 34:1-2)? ** Dinah was raped or seduced by Shechem

--- What did the man involved want then (Gen. 34:3-4)? ** to marry her

--- How did Dinah's brothers react to all this (Gen. 34:7)? ** they were very angry but pretended to go along with it, saying that all their males should be circumcised first

--- But what was the final outcome of all of this (Gen. 34:14-30)? ** Simeon and Levi went in and killed them and looted the city, taking Dinah home with them

--- Did Papa Jacob approve of the brothers' solution (Gen. 34:30)? ** no

--- Did Jacob have a favorite son? ** yes

--- Who was it (Gen. 37:3)? ** Joseph

--- What special thing did Jacob give to Joseph (Gen. 37:3)? ** a coat of many colors

--- What did Joseph's brothers think of him (Gen. 37:4)? ** they were jealous of him and hated him

--- What special things happened to Joseph that turned out to show that he had at an early age been chosen by God to be a prophet (Gen 37:5-10)? ** he had 2 prophetic dreams

--- What happened to Joseph when his father Jacob sent him to check up on his brothers as they were herding the flocks (Gen. 37:12-30)? ** his brothers sold him as a slave to passing merchants

--- How did their father, Jacob, take this (Gen. 37:34, 35)? ** he mourned greatly and wouldn't be comforted

--- Where did Joseph end up (Gen. 39:1)? ** in Egypt, in the house of Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard.

--- Who was on Joseph's side during his troubles (Gen. 39:2,3)? ** God

--- How was Joseph treated in Potiphar's house (Gen. 39:4)? ** very well; he was put in charge of Potiphar's entire house

--- What happened to Joseph after a while and why (Gen. 39:7-20)? ** Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph, and when he wouldn't cooperate, she said Joseph tried to rape her, and Joseph was throw into jail

How did Joseph get along in prison and why (Gen. 39:21-23)? ** very well, because God was with him, so Joseph was put in charge of the prison

--- Who were also put in jail (Gen. 40:1-3)? ** the king's butler and baker

--- What happened to them one night (Gen. 40:5)? ** they both had a disturbing dream

--- How was Joseph involved with this (Gen. 41:9-13)? ** he correctly interpreted the dreams for them

--- Later Pharaoh had a dream that Joseph interpreted also; what did Pharaoh's dream mean (Gen 41:29-31)? ** that there would be 7 years of great plenty followed by 7 years of terrible famine

-- Now in what position was the slave Joseph placed (Gen. 42:39-40)? ** as second in the kingdom of Egypt

--- How old was Joseph when he became the second greatest man in the land of Egypt (Gen.41:46)? ** 30 years old

--- How did Joseph prepare Egypt for the coming famine (Gen 41:48-49)? ** he built store houses and filled them with the extra grain that grew during the 7 years of plenty

-- When the famine came, was it only in Egypt (Gen. 41:56-57)? ** no, also in Canaan and all over that part of the world

--- Who then went down to buy food in Egypt (Gen. 42:3-4)? ** everyone from the surrounding area including Joseph's 10 brothers

--- Who knew whom and who did not know somebody (Gen. 42:8)? ** Joseph recognized his brothers, but they didn't recognize him

--- How did Joseph really scare his brothers (Gen. 24:9, 17, 19-20)? ** he insisted they were spies, put them all in jail for 3 days, then kept Simeon in jail and sent the others home, telling them not to bother coming back without Benjamin.

--- What did the brothers find in their grain sacks that scared them even more (Gen. 42:35)? ** their money

--- How did it get into the sacks (Gen. 42:25)? ** Joseph had ordered for it to be put there

--- When they finally had to go back for more food, who was finally able to persuade Jacob to send his youngest son Benjamin with the other brothers so they could get more food from

Egypt (Gen. 43:8-9)? ** Judah

--- What did Joseph do when he saw them on this second trip (Gen. 43:16)? ** had his steward take them to his home for dinner

--- How did they react to this (the first part of Gen. 43:18)? ** they were scared, thinking it was because of the money that had been in their sacks

--- But Joseph just invited them to dinner and treated them well, showing particular favoritism to his full brother Benjamin, but then as they left, what trick did Joseph repeat and with what addition (Gen. 44:1-2)? ** he had their money put back in their sacks again plus he had his own silver cup put into Benjamin's sack

--- When Joseph sent his steward after them and the cup was found, how did the brothers react (Gen. 44:13)? ** in despair, they tore their clothes, loaded up, and all went back to Joseph

--- How did Judah propose to deal with the situation (Gen 44:33)? ** Judah begged Joseph to keep him as a slave instead of Benjamin

--- What did the brothers think was the cause of all of this trouble they were having? ** they thought their troubles were coming on them because of their treatment of Joseph about 20 years earlier

--- Do you think the brothers were truly repentant for having sold Joseph as a slave so many years before (Gen. 42:21)? ** yes

--- How did Joseph now react to Judah's words (Gen 45:1-3)? ** he couldn't take it any longer and began to cry and told them who he was

--- And how did the brothers react to this revelation of Joseph (Gen. 45:3)? ** so scared they couldn't talk

--- At this point, in what godly manner did Joseph talk to his brothers (Gen. 45:5-8)? ** Joseph told them not to be mad at themselves or unhappy, that God had sent Joseph to Egypt in order to keep them alive during the famine

--- So the brothers returned home and told their father everything, and what did Jacob (Israel) do now at Joseph's and Pharaoh's request (Gen. 46:5,6)? ** Jacob packed up and started to Egypt

--- Was this all right by God (Gen. 46:2-4)? ** yes, God appeared to Jacob in a vision and told him to go to Egypt and not be afraid and He was going to make a great nation of Jacob's family there

--- How many people were in Jacob's family when he got to Egypt (Gen 46:27)? ** 70

--- How old was Jacob when he went to Egypt (Gen. 47:9)? ** 130

--- How long did Jacob live in Egypt before he died (Gen. 47: 28)? ** 17 years

--- What promise did Jacob get from Joseph as it was time for Jacob to die (Gen.47:29-30)? ** that he would take his body back to Canaan and bury it in the Cave of Machpelah with his family

--- When it was about time for Israel (Jacob) to die, what did he do concerning Joseph's 2 sons (Gen. 48:5)? ** Jacob took Joseph's 2 sons to be his (Jacob's) own sons, adopted them

--- What were the names of Joseph's sons (Gen. 48:5)? ** Ephraim and Manasseh

--- What prophesy did Jacob give at this time concerning his own family (Gen. 48:21)? ** Jacob said that God would take them back into the Land of Canaan

--- Who did Israel (Jacob) call to him as he was dying (Gen. 49:1)? ** all of his sons

--- Why (Gen. 49:1, 28)? ** so he could bless them and tell them about what would happen to their families later

--- In your opinion, do you think that we can fairly call Israel (Jacob) a prophet? ** yes

-- Did Joseph keep his promise that he made to his father about burying him in the Cave of Machpelah (Gen. 50:13)? ** yes; Joseph had a big funeral for Jacob back in Canaan and buried him in the Cave Machpelah, the family burial cave

--- Who else were buried in that cave (Gen. 49:31)? ** Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Leah

--- What do we now find had been the brothers' state of mind all of those 17 years (Gen. 50:15)? ** they had been afraid that Joseph was just waiting for their father to die before getting his revenge on his brothers for their hateful treatment of him (Joseph) almost 40 years earlier

--- Need they have worried (Gen. 50:19-21)? ** no, Joseph had long ago forgiven them; he wept and said that what they had meant for bad was really good, because had sent him to Egypt to save them and many other during the famine

--- A personal question: Do you think Joseph might be a good example for us to follow in our own lives? ** very much so; we should recognize that it is God who is working in our lives and be forgiving of others

--- How many generations of descendants did Joseph live to see (Gen. 50:23)? ** 3, Joseph saw his great-grandchildren

--- How many generations did God say would "live in the land" (Gen.15:16)? ** 4

--- Did Joseph believe that God kept His promises (Gen. 50:24)? ** absolutely; Joseph knew that God had promised to bring the descendants of Jacob out of Egypt

--- As he was dying, what did Joseph make his relatives promise to do (Gen. 50:25)? ** he made them promise to take his bones out of Egypt when God took them out

--- As you think about it, what do you think might be one reason why Joseph got this promise from them (Gen. 48:21)? ** to remind them constantly that God would take them out of Egypt

--- I know this is a "repeat question", but look at your history time line chart again; about how many years does the book of Genesis cover? ** about 2400

--- Approximately what percent of man's entire history does the book of Genesis cover (look at history time line)? ** a little over a third!

=== So Genesis starts with Creation and ends with Joseph's body in a coffin waiting to be taken back to Canaan when the Lord fulfilled His promise to Abraham.

APPLICATIONS:

** All of the Bible is important, and God gives it to us for a reason, so we should carefully study everything about it that we can.

** The Lord makes promises -- and He keeps them!

** God is in charge of everything and has His plans and works things out the way He wants them to be.

** The Jews are very special to God, and we should be careful how we deal with them as a race.

Following this is a "test" of the book of Genesis and the Introductory Lessons that we had on how th Bible is put together and the Timeline. I had originally made the test, then I'd decided just to make a lesson out of it, as I figured no one would bother filling in the answers! Do as you want!

"Test" on the Book of Genesis & Introductory Lessons
(Answers start on page 404)

Questions:

Refer to "How Bible is Put Together" charts in your Chart Notebook:

1. What are the 2 major parts of the Bible?

2. Into how many parts are these 2 major parts divided?

3. List how the Old Testament is divided up:

4. List how the New Testament is divided up:

5. How did they decide the order in which to put the books of the Historical section of the Old Testament?

Refer to the History Time Line chart in your Chart Notebook:

6. Just for a quick over-view of the history of the Old Testament: It starts with the book of Genesis, after that comes the Period of the _____________, then the Period of the _____________, then comes the Babylonian ______________. After that is about a _______ year gap before the New Testament.

7. About how long a period of time does the book of Genesis take?

Review of Genesis with references:

8. How long did it take God to create everything? (Gen. 1:4, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:1-2)

9. Why did God say He made Eve? (Gen. 2:18)

10. Who named the animals? (Gen. 2:19-20)

11. Why did Adam & Eve leave the Garden of Eden? (Gen. 2:17, 22, 24)

12. Now for the question that unbelieving people love to ask & think they have stumped us! Where did Cain get his wife?

13. Why was Abel's sacrifice acceptable to God & Cain's wasn't? (Hint: This is tricky; check Hebrews 11:4)

13a. After the deal of Abel, who became the righteous son of Adam and the ancestor of Noah?

14. Were the men before the flood just a bunch of grunting cavemen? (Gen. 4:2, 17, 20-22)

15. Tell me a little about the pre-Flood civilization from what it says in Gen. 4:20-22.

Using the History Time Line chart again:

16. From your chart, about how years were there between Creation & the Flood?

17. Also from the chart, about how many years between the Flood & Abraham?

18. About how many years does the New Testament cover?

18. About how many years in the B.C. period?

19. What name can we use to divide the B.C. period roughly into halves?

20. What names can we use to divide the rest of the B.C. period into 500 year periods?

Back to the book of Genesis:

21. How many generations are there from Adam to Noah? (Gen. 5:1-29)

22. What interesting and unique event is told about Enoch in Gen. 5:22?

23. Which man listed in Gen. 5 lived the longest number of years?

24. Who was Noah's father? (Gen. 5:28-29)

25. What does the word "ark" mean? (It doesn't tell in the Bible; it's something I told you, so you may not remember.)

26. How did Noah know how to build the ark? (Gen. 6:13-16)

27. How long did it rain when the flood came? (Gen. 7:4)

28. How many people were in the ark & who were they? (Gen. 7:7)

29. How long were they in the ark? (I told you this & it can be figured from Noah's age, but don't worry if you don't get it!) (Gen. 7:9-11; Gen. 8:14)

30. What did Noah do the first thing after leaving the ark? (Gen. 8:20)

31. All of mankind was now in one spot just outside of the ark. What did God tell them they could eat? (Gen. 9:3)

32. What did God tell all mankind they could not eat? (Gen. 9:4)

33. Why not? (Gen. 9:4)

34. What did God tell Noah should be done to murderers? (Gen. 9:5-6)

35. Why? (Gen. 9:6)

36. What did God tell Noah that He would never do again? (Gen. (9:11, 15)

37. What sign did God give that we today may know that God remembers this promise to Noah? (Gen. 9:13)

38. What big event that happened between the Flood & Abraham are we told about & how does it affect us even today (Gen. 11:1-9?)

38a. The descendants of which son of Noah does the Bible now concentrate on and why?

39. Who was Abraham's wife (Gen. 11:31)?

40. What relationship was she to Abraham besides his wife (Gen. 20:12)?

41. Why did Abraham go to the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1)?

42. Did Abraham have any reason to believe that he might ever have children (Gen. 15:13-18)?

43. Whose idea was it for Abraham to take a second wife (Gen. 16:1,2)?

44. Why was this idea suggested (Gen. 16:1)?

45. What was the name of Abraham's second wife (Gen 16:3)?

46. What was the name of his son by her & how old was Abraham at the time (Gen 16:15, 16)?

47. What surprising promise did God have for Abraham (Gen. 17:19), & how old was Abraham at the time (Gen. 17:1)? (Remember, Sarah was 10 years younger than Abraham!)

48. How could Sarah know that this would really happen (Gen. 18:1, 10-14)?

49. What judgment of God is Abraham told about by God in Gen. 18:16-22?

50. Why would this especially worry Abraham (Gen. 12:10-11 & Gen. 19:1)?

51. Who was Lot (Gen. 12:5)?

51a. What were the names of Lot's sons (unintentionally gotten through his daughters) (Gen. 19:37-38)?

52. What was the name of the son of Abraham & Sarah? (Gen. 21:3)

53. What does his name mean & why (Gen. 17:19, Gen. 18: 12-13)?

54. What other reason for his name (Gen. 21:6,7)?

55. How did Isaac get a wife (Gen. 24)?

56. Was she related to Isaac (Gen. 22:20 & Gen. 24:24)?

57. How old was Isaac when he got married & how old was he when he became a father (Gen. 25:20 & 26)?

57a. Which of Abraham's 8 sons (1 by Hagar, 1 by Sarah, and 6 by Keturah) is the Bible now going to concentrate on and why?

58. What are the names of Isaac's sons (Gen. 25:24-26)?

59. God said in Gen.25:23 that one son would be predominant. Which one?

60. As a review, name the 3 generations (father, son, & grandson) that we have just been talking about in questions 39-58. God calls Himself the God of these 3 men.

61. How did Esau lose his birthright (Gen. 25:29-34)?

62. How did Esau, in addition, lose his blessing (Gen. 27:1-40)?

63. What was Esau's reaction to losing the blessing (Gen. 27:41)?

64. Why did Jacob leave his family (Gen.27:42-45)?

65. What reason for leaving did his mother use (Gen. 27:46 - Gen. 28:4)?

66. What interesting, special dream did Jacob have on the journey (Gen. 28:11-15)?

67. What was the name of Jacob's uncle (Gen. 28:2)?

68. Tell about Jacob's unusual wedding (Gen. 29:15-25)?

69. What did dear Uncle Laban give as a reason for this & how did he propose to remedy it (Gen. 29:25-28)?

70. Did Jacob end up with any more wives & why (Gen. 30:1-4 & 9)?

71. Make a little chart here listing Jacob's wives with their children's names under them (Gen. 29:31:-35; 30:4-8; 30:10-13; 30:17-21; 30:22-24; 35:16-18)

1. ___________ 2. ____________ 3. ____________ 4. ____________

72. So how many children did Jacob have? ______ Sons & _____ Daughters

72a. Through which son of Jacob was Jesus descended?

73. Why did Jacob take his family & leave his Uncle Laban's (Gen. 30:42 - 31:1-2)?

74. Was it all right by God that Jacob left? (Gen. 32:3)?

75. Why wasn't there a big send-off by Laban for his daughters, grandchildren & his nephew Jacob (Gen. 31:19-21)?

76. Just a matter of your opinion here. Does this sound like a sensible act of Jacob, considering his uncle's past behavior? (consult Gen. 31:41)

77. How long had Jacob been with his Uncle Laban (Gen. 31:38)?

78. How did Jacob feel about meeting his brother Esau after all this time (Gen. 32:3-7)?

79. What event took place the night before Jacob met Esau (Gen. 32:24-32)?

80. What new name was Jacob given & by whom (Gen. 32:28)?

81. Was the meeting between the twins Jacob & Esau peaceable (Gen. 33:1-4)?

82. What terrible event took place after Jacob & his family settled in Canaan (Gen. 34:1-2)?

83. What did the man involved want then (Gen. 34:3-4)?

84. How did Dinah's brothers react to all this (Gen. 34:7)?

85. What was the final outcome of all of this (Gen. 34:14-30)?

86. Did Papa Jacob approve of the brothers' solution (Gen. 34:30)?

87. Did Jacob have a favorite son? ____ If so, who was it (Gen. 37:3)?

88. What special thing did Jacob give to Joseph (Gen. 37:3)?

89. What did Joseph's brothers think of him (Gen. 37:4)?

90. What special things happened to Joseph that turned out to show that he had at an early age been chosen by God to be a prophet (Gen 37:5-10)?

91. What happened to Joseph when his father Jacob sent him to check up on his brothers as they were herding the flocks (Gen. 37:12-30)?

92. How did their father, Jacob, take this (Gen. 37:34, 35)?

93. Where did Joseph end up (Gen. 39:1)?

94. Who was "on Joseph's side" (Gen. 39:2,3)?

95. How was Joseph treated (Gen. 39:4)?

96. What happened to Joseph after a while & why (Gen. 39:7-20)?

97. How did Joseph get along in prison & why (Gen. 39:21-23)?

98. Who were also put in jail (Gen. 40:1-3)?

99. What happened to them one night (Gen. 40:5)?

100. How was Joseph involved with this (Gen. 41:9-13)?

101. Pharoah had a dream that Joseph interpreted also. What did Pharoah's dream mean (Gen 41:29-31)?

102. Now in what position was the slave Joseph (Gen. 42:39-40)?

103. How old was Joseph when he became the second greatest man in the land of Egypt (Gen.41:46)?

104. How did Joseph prepare Egypt for the coming famine (Gen 41:48-49)?

105. Was the famine only in Egypt (Gen. 41:56-57)?

106. Who in Gen. 42:3-4 now went down to buy food in Egypt?

107. Who knew whom & who did not know somebody (Gen. 42:8)?

108. How did Joseph really scare his brothers (Gen. 24:9, 17, 19-20)?

109. What did the brothers find in their grain sacks that scared them even more (Gen. 42:35)?

110. How did it get into the sacks (Gen. 42:25)?

111. Who finally persuaded Jacob to send his youngest son, Benjamin with the other brothers so they could get more food from Egypt (Gen. 43:8-9)?

112. What did Joseph do when he saw them on this second trip (Gen. 43:16)?

113. How did they react to this (the first part of Gen. 43:18)?

114. What trick did Joseph repeat & with what addition (Gen. 44:1-2)?

115. When Joseph sent his steward after them & the cup was found, how did the brothers react (Gen. 44:13)?

116. How did Judah propose to deal with the situation (Gen 44:33)?

117. Do you think the brothers were truly repentant for having sold Joseph as a slave about 18 years earlier? (Gen. 42:21)

118. How did Joseph now react to Judah's words (Gen 45:1-3)?

119. And how did the brothers react to Joseph?! (Gen. 45:3)

120. At this point, in what godly manner did Joseph talk to his brothers (Gen. 45:5-8)?

121. What did Jacob (Israel) do now at Joseph's & Pharoah's request (Gen. 46:5,6)?

122. Was this all right by God (Gen. 46:2-4)?

123. How many people were in Jacob's family when he got to Egypt (Gen 46:27)?

124. How old was Jacob when he went to Egypt (Gen. 47:9)?

125. How long did Jacob live in Egypt before he died (Gen. 47: 28)?

126. What promise did Jacob get from Joseph as it was time for Jacob to die (Gen.47:29-30)?

127. When it was about time for Israel (Jacob) to die, what did he do concerning Joseph's 2 sons (Gen. 48:5)?

128. What were the names of Joseph's sons (Gen. 48:5)?

129. What prophesy did Jacob give at this time concerning Joseph himself (Gen. 48:21)?

130. Who did Israel (Jacob) call to him as he was dying (Gen. 49:1)?

131. Why (Gen. 49:1)?

132. In your opinion, do you think that we can fairly call Israel (Jacob) a prophet?

133. Did Joseph keep his promise that he made to his father in question #126, above (Gen. 50:13)?

134. Who all were buried in that cave (Gen. 49:31)?

135. What do we now find had been the brothers' state of mind all of those 17 years (Gen. 50:15)?

136. Need they have worried (Gen. 50:19-21)?

137. A personal question: Do you think Joseph might be a good example for us to follow in our own lives?

138. How many generations of descendants did Joseph live to see (Gen. 50:23)?

139. How many generations did God say would "live in the land" (Gen.15:16)?

140. Did Joseph believe that God kept His promises (Gen. 50:24)?

141. As he was dying, what did Joseph make his relatives promise to do (Gen. 50:25)?

142. As you think about it, what do you think might be one reason why Joseph got this promise from them (Gen. 48:21)?

143. I know this is a "repeat question", but look at your history time line chart again. About how many years does the book of Genesis cover?

144. Approximately what percent of man's entire history does the book of Genesis cover (look at history time line)?

Answers to Genesis "Test"

1. Old Testament & New Testament
2. 3 parts each
3. History, Poetry, & Prophecy
4. History, Letters, & Prophecy
5. Put them into chronological order
6. Judges, Kings, Captivity, 400 yrs.
7. about 2350 yrs. (2400 is close enough)
8. 6 literal days
9. Because "it wasn't good for man to be alone"
10. Adam
11. Because now that they had disobeyed God by eating of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evil, they were sinful. God had promised them that if they ate of that tree that they would die. But if they stayed in the Garden of Eden, they would eat of the Tree of Life & live forever. Therefore, they had to leave in order for what God said to come to pass.
12. It's obvious; he married either his sister or his niece!
13. Because Abel offered his sacrifice by faith & Cain had no faith.

13a. Seth

14. no
15. There were iron workers, smelters, combining of metals (brass), ironworkers; there were musicians of stringed & wind instruments; there were cattlemen & tent makers; from Gen. 4:2, we know that there were farmers, and from Gen. 4:17, we knew there were city dwellers.
16. about 1650 yrs.
17. about 350 yrs.
18. about 90 yrs.
19. about 4000 yrs.
20. Abraham
20. Moses, David, & Daniel
21. 10 generations
22. that he never died but was taken up to Heaven
23. Methuselah (969 yrs.)
24. Lamech
25. "ark" means "box"
26. God told him
27. 40 days and nights
28. 8 people: Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, & their respective wives
29. They were 1 yr. 17 days total in the ark; but only 1 yr, 10 days from rains' coming until they left the ark. They were in the ark a week before the rain came.
30. Sacrificed one of every clean animal & of every clean bird (the "7th" animal or bird)
31. Every moving thing that lives and plants
32. Not the meat with blood.
33. "The life was in it"
34. They were to be killed.
35. Because man was made in the image of God.
36. There would never be a flood over all of the world again nor all people killed by a flood again.

37. rainbow
38. Tower of Babel. Today people speak different languages & have trouble communicating.
38a. Shem, because he would become the ancestor of Abraham, hence of the Jewish nation through which God revealed Himself and also the ancestor of the Messiah, Jesus, through Whom would come salvation.
39. Sarai (later known as Sarah)
40. His half-sister by his father
41. God told him to!
42. Yes, God promised that things would happen to "his seed"
43. Sarai, his wife's
44. Sarai was barren.
45. Hagar
46. Ishmael. Abraham was 86 yrs. old
47. That Sarah would have a son. Abraham was 99 at the time of the promise.
48. The Lord & 2 angels ("3 men") came to visit, repeated that Sarah would have a son, knew Sarah had laughed, & again repeated that she would have a son.
49. That Sodom & Gomorrah were going to be destroyed because of their wickedness.
50. Abraham's nephew Lot lived in Sodom.
51. The son of Abraham's brother, Haran.
51a. Moab and Ammon
52. Isaac
53. It means "Laughter". Because both Abraham & Sarah laughed (on separate occasions) when they heard that Sarah would have a son.
54. Sarah was so happy when he was born that she said that other women would laugh with her.
55. Abraham sent his trusted servant back up to Abraham's brother Nahor's family to get a relative for Isaac to marry.
56. Yes, she was his first cousin.
57. Isaac was 40 when he married & 60 when he became a father.
57a. Isaac, because he was the one through whom the Jews and Jesus came.
58. Esau & Jacob
59. The younger son (which was Jacob)
60. Abraham,Isaac, & Jacob
61. Esau came in tired & sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of beans.
62. Isaac was tricked by Jacob who, at his mother's instigation, gave his blind father Isaac a goat stew before Esau got back for hunting for deer.
63. Esau planned on killing Jacob as soon as their father Isaac died.
64. So his brother would have time to cool down & not kill him when their father died.
65. Supposedly to get a wife from among his relatives.
66. He dreamed that God was on top of a ramp leading from Heaven to earth & angels were walking up & down & God promised to give the land Jacob was on to Jacob's descendants & to be with Jacob & to bring Jacob back home again.
67. Laban
68. He got the wrong girl! (Leah instead of Rachel)
69. The older girl in a family had to marry before her younger sister could, so Jacob could just marry Rachel in a week & then work for her.
70. Yes. As each sister couldn't bear children (Rachel at first, then Leah after having 4 sons), she gave her maidservant to Jacob as a wife to bear children for her.
71. 1. LEAH: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dinah
    2. RACHEL:Joseph, Benjamin

3. BILHAH: Dan, Naphtali
4. ZILPAH: Gad, Asher

72. 13 children: 12 sons & 1 daughter
72a. Judah
73. Jacob was getting rich in herds, & his cousins were getting jealous, & it seems that even Laban was beginning to look unfavorably on Jacob.
74. Yes. God appeared to him in a vision & told him he could go.
75. Jacob sneaked of when Uncle Laban was away shearing sheep because he was afraid that Laban would stop him & take Leah & Rachel & the children.
76. Yes. His uncle had not dealt honestly with him in the past, changing his wages as he went.
77. 20 years
78. Scared!
79. Jacob wrestled with God all night.
80. Jacob was renamed Israel by God.
81. Yes
82. Dinah was seduced or raped by a man, Hamor.
83. To marry Dinah.
84. Very angry.
85. The brothers pretended to agree to the marriage if all of the men in the village would be circumcised. When they were, Simeon & Levi went & killed all of them & took Dinah back.
86. Not at all.
87. Yes, Joseph
88. A coat of many colors
89. They hated Joseph & wouldn't even speak pleasantly to him.
90. Prophetic dreams about his brothers bowing to him & even his father bowing to him.
91. The brothers grabbed Joseph, tore off his coat. They had planned to kill him, but Reuben persuaded them just to put him in a dry well (planning to come back & rescue him), then while Reuben was away the other brothers sold Joseph to slave traders.
92. Jacob mourned & wouldn't be comforted.
93. Egypt, in the house of Potiphar, the captain of Pharoah's guard.
94. God
95. Very well. Joseph was put in charge of Potiphar's entire house.
96. Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph, & when he wouldn't cooperate, she said Joseph tried to rape her, & Joseph was throw into jail.
97. Very well. God was with him, so he was put in charge of the prison.
98. Pharoah's chief butler & baker.
99. They both had dreams that bothered them.
100. He was able to interpret the dreams -- & correctly!
101. That there would be 7 years of plenty in Egypt & then 7 years of famine.
102. Became 2nd only to Pharaoh in Egypt.
103. 30 years old
104. He gathered up all the extra crops & stored them.
105. No, it was all over that part of the world.
106. Joseph's ten older brothers
107. Joseph recognized them, but the brothers didn't recognize him.
108. He insisted they were spies, put them all in jail for 3 days, then kept Simeon in jail & sent the others home, telling them not to bother coming back without Benjamin.
109. Their money back.
110. Joseph had it put there before they left.

111. Judah
112. Had his steward take them to his home for dinner.
113. Scared! They though it was because of the money that had been in their sacks.
114. He had their money put back in their sacks again plus he had his own silver cup put into Benjamin's sack.
115. In despair! Tore their clothes, loaded up, & all went back to Joseph.
116. Judah begged Joseph to keep him as a slave instead of Benjamin.
117. Yes. They thought their troubles were coming on them because of their treatment of Joseph about 20 years earlier.
118. He couldn't take it any longer & began to cry & told them who he was.
119. So scared they couldn't talk.
120. Joseph told them not to be made at themselves or unhappy, that God had sent Joseph to Egypt in order to keep them alive during the famine.
121. Jacob packed up & started to Egypt.
122. Yes. God appeared to Jacob in a vision & told him to go to Egypt & not be afraid & He was going to make a great nation of Jacob's family there.
123. 70
124. Jacob was 130 years old when he went into Egypt.
125. 17 years
126. Jacob made Joseph promise to take Jacob's body back to the Land of Canaan & bury it in his family's cave.
127. Jacob took Joseph's 2 sons to be his (Jacob's) own sons.
128. Ephraim & Manasseh
129. Jacob said that God would take Joseph back into the Land of Canaan.
130. As he was dying, Jacob called all of his sons to him.
131. He was going to prophecy about them & their descendants.
132. Yes.
133. Yes. Joseph had a big funeral for Jacob back in Canaan & buried him in the Cave Macpelah, the family burial cave.
134. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, & Leah were buried there.
135. They were afraid that Joseph was just waiting for their father to die before getting his revenge on his brothers for their hateful treatment of him (Joseph) almost 40 years earlier.
136. No. Joseph had long ago forgiven them. He wept & said that what they had meant for bad was really good, because had sent him to Egypt to save them and many other during the famine.
137. Very much so. We should recognize that it is God who is working in our lives & be forgiving of others.
138. Joseph saw his great-grandchildren.
139. 4
140. Absolutely. Joseph knew that God had promised to bring the descendants of Jacob out of Egypt.
141. He made them promise to take his bones out of Egypt when God took them out.
142. To remind them constantly that God would take them out of Egypt & also because of his father Jacob's prophecy that God would take Joseph out of Egypt back into the Land of Canaan.
143. About 2350 years (2400 will do!)
144. Genesis covers a little over 33%

HELPS FOR THE TEACHER

CHART: A VERY BASIC OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE

I. Old Testament
    A. History
    B. Poetry
    C. Prophesy
        1. Major
        2. Minor

II. New Testament
    A. History
    B. Letters
        1. Paul's
        2. Others'
    C. Prophesy

HOW THE BIBLE IS PUT TOGETHER

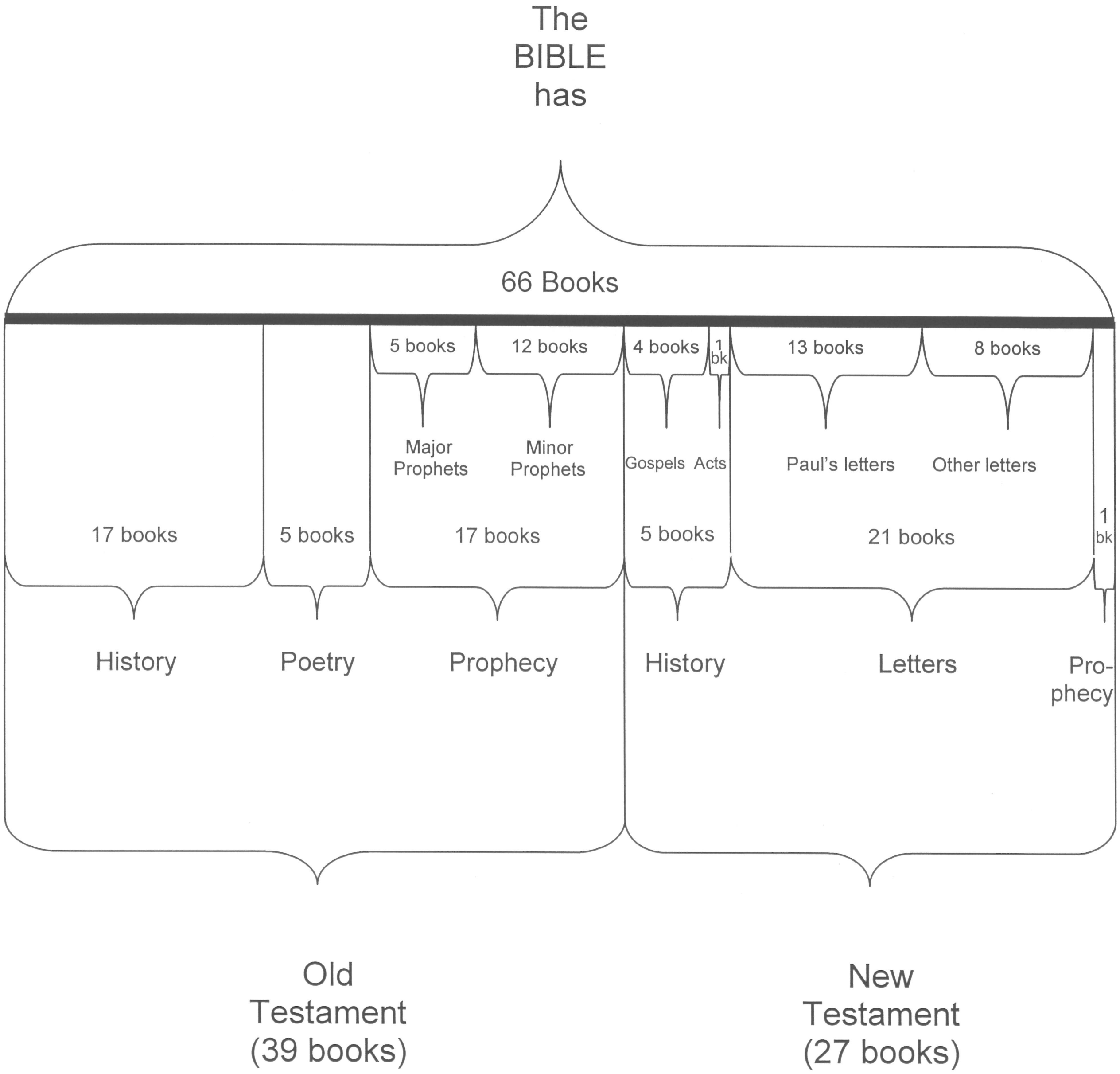

The BIBLE has
66 Books
5 books
12 books
4 books
1 bk
13 books
8 books
Major Prophets
Minor Prophets
Gospels
Acts
Paul's letters
Other letters
17 books
5 books
17 books
5 books
21 books
1 bk
History
Poetry
Prophecy
History
Letters
Pro-phecy
Old Testament (39 books)
New Testament (27 books)

CHART: AN OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE WITH BOOKS LISTED

THE BIBLE
has
66 books

OLD TESTAMENT
(39 books)

HISTORY
(17)

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuter.
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
I Sam.
II Sam.
I Kings
II Kings
I Chron.
II Chron.
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

POETRY
(5)

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Eccles.
S. of Sol.

PROPHESY
(17)

MAJOR
- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel

MINOR
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi

NEW TESTAMENT
(27 books)

HISTORY
(5)

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts

LETTERS
(21)

PAUL'S
- Romans
- I Cor.
- II Cor.
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- I Thessalonians
- II Thessalonians
- I Timothy
- II Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon

OTHERS
- Hebrews
- James
- I Peter
- II Peter
- I John
- II John
- III John
- Jude

PROPHESY
(1)

Revelation

CHART: THE ORDER OF THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES
As an Item of Interest

1) The Law:
    - Genesis through II Kings (the same as ours)
2) The Prophets:
    - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel
    - The 12 Minor Prophets (in the same order as we do)
3) The Writings:
    - Psalms, Proverbs
    - Job
    - Song of Solomon
    - Ruth
    - Lamentations
    - Ecclesiastes
    - Esther
    - Daniel
    - Ezra, Nehemiah
    - I & II Chronicles

TIMELINE FROM CREATION TO PRESENT TIME

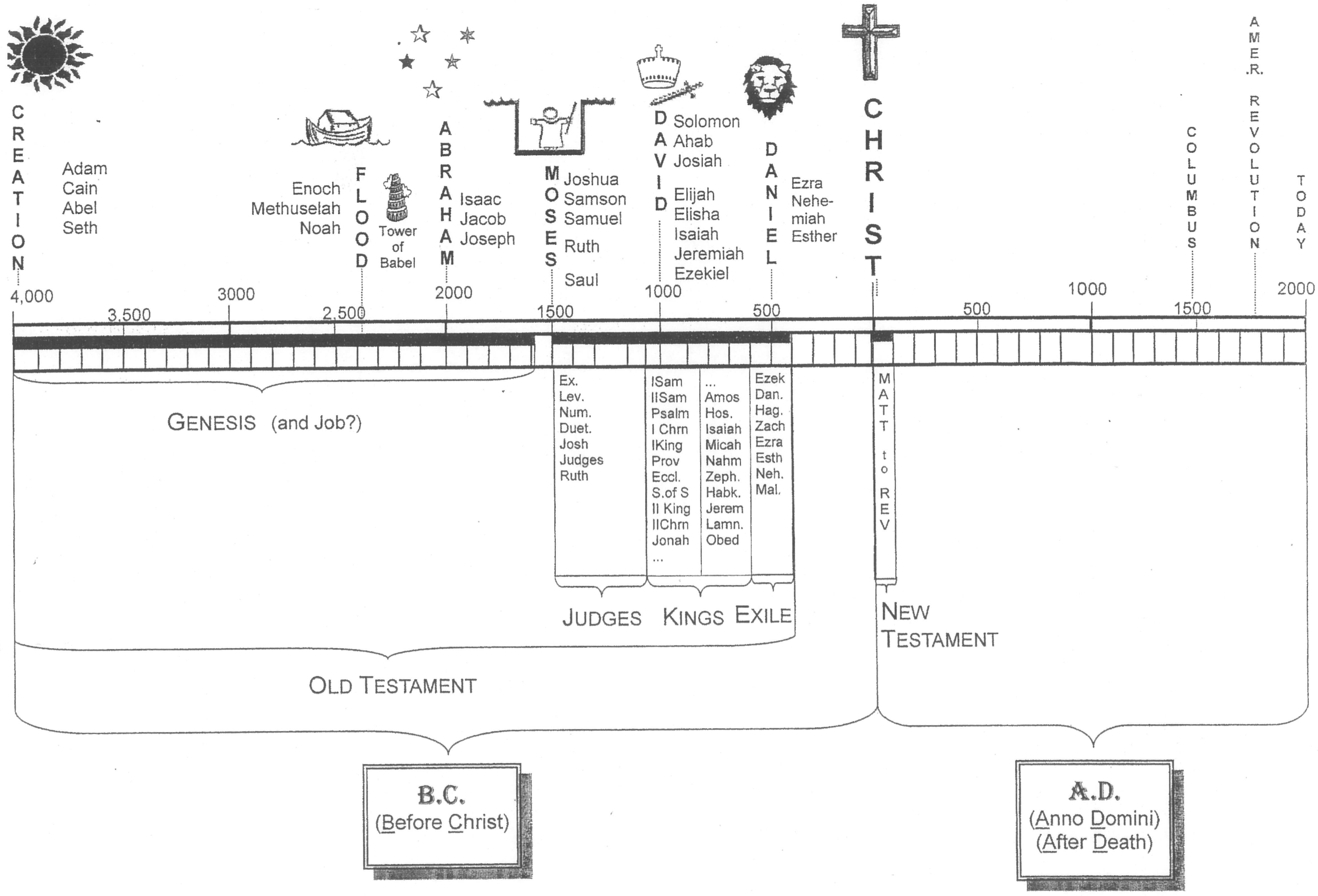

CREATION
Adam
Cain
Abel
Seth
Enoch
Methuselah
Noah
FLOOD
Tower of Babel
ABRAHAM
Isaac
Jacob
Joseph
MOSES
Joshua
Samson
Samuel
Ruth
Saul
DAVID
Solomon
Ahab
Josiah
Elijah
Elisha
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Ezekiel
DANIEL
Ezra
Nehe-miah
Esther
CHRIST
COLUMBUS
AMER.R. REVOLUTION
TODAY
4,000
3,500
3000
2,500
2000
1500
1000
500
500
1000
1500
2000
GENESIS (and Job?)
Ex.
Lev.
Num.
Duet.
Josh
Judges
Ruth
ISam
IISam
Psalm
I Chrn
IKing
Prov
Eccl.
S.of S
II King
IIChrn
Jonah
...
...
Amos
Hos.
Isaiah
Micah
Nahm
Zeph.
Habk.
Jerem
Lamn.
Obed
Ezek
Dan.
Hag.
Zach
Ezra
Esth
Neh.
Mal.
MATT to REV
JUDGES
KINGS
EXILE
NEW TESTAMENT
OLD TESTAMENT
B.C.
(Before Christ)
A.D.
(Anno Domini)
(After Death)

CHART: DAYS OF CREATION

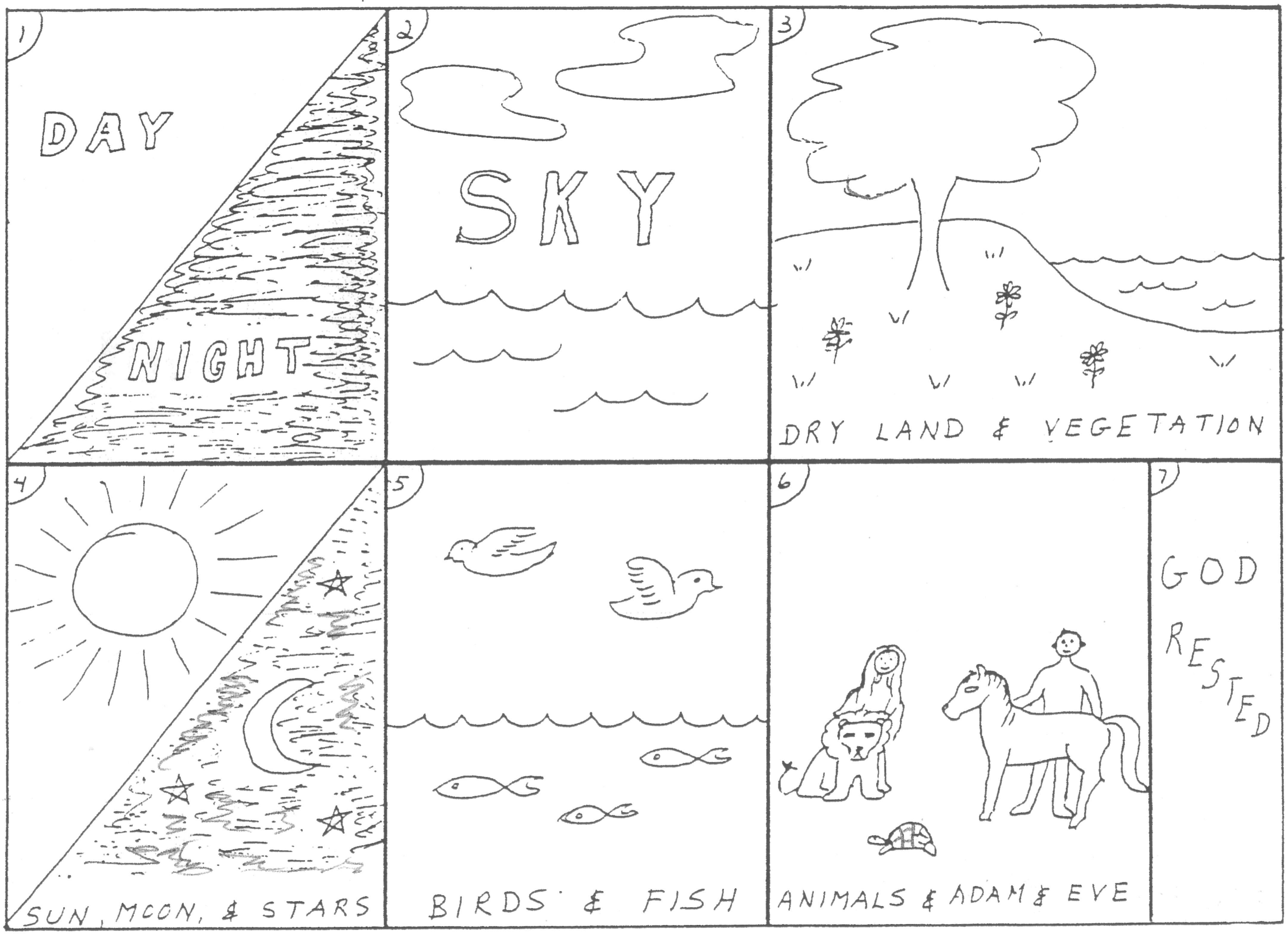
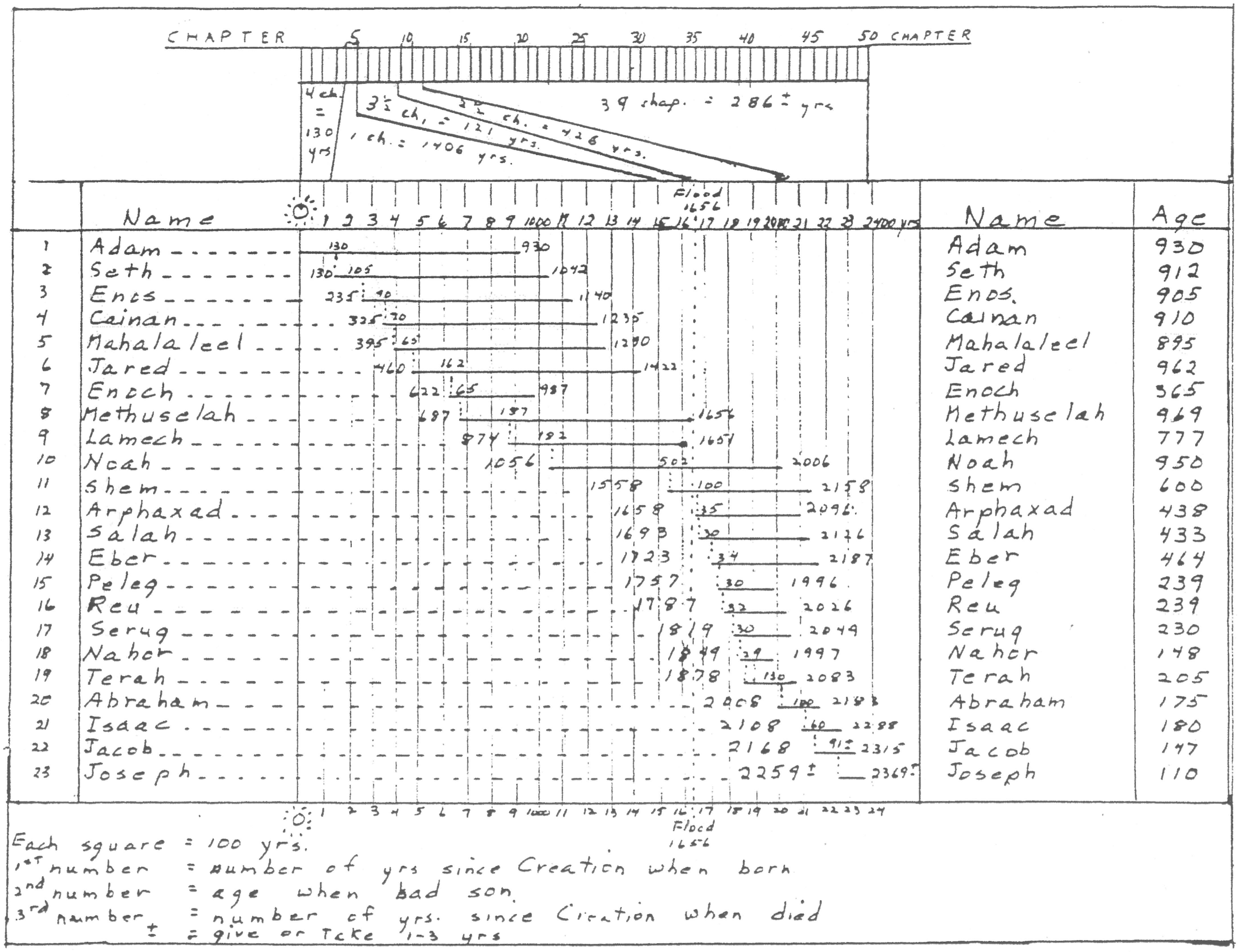
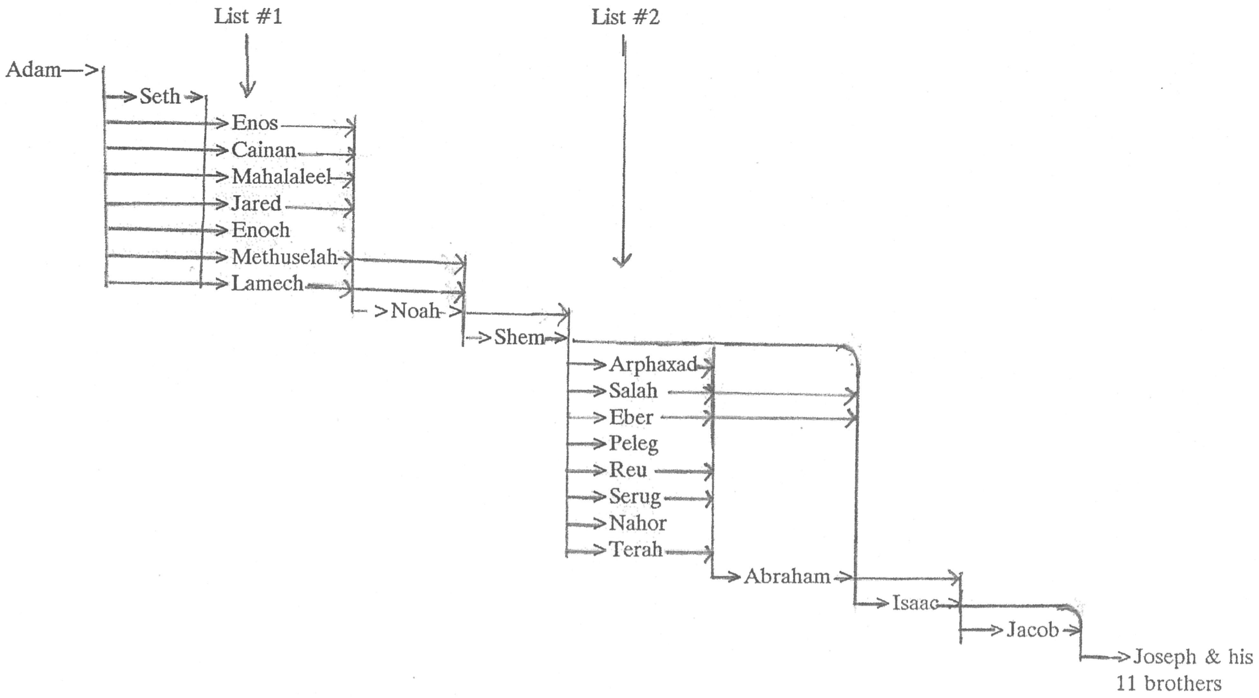

1
DAY
NIGHT
2
SKY
3
DRY LAND & VEGETATION
4
SUN, MOON, & STARS
5
BIRDS & FISH
6
ANIMALS & ADAM & EVE
7
GOD
RESTED

CHART: TIME LINE OF GENESIS BY OVERLAPPING GENERATIONS & CHAPTERS



Each square = 100 yrs.
1st number = number of yrs since Creation when born
2nd number = age when had son.
3rd number = number of yrs. since Creation when died
± = give or take 1-3 yrs

WHO COULD HAVE TALKED WITH WHOM?


List #1
List #2
Adam
Seth
Enos
Cainan
Mahalaleel
Jared
Enoch
Methuselah
Lamech
Noah
Shem
Arphaxad
Salah
Eber
Peleg
Reu
Serug
Nahor
Terah
Abraham
Isaac
Jacob
Joseph & his 11 brothers

So...

Adam .... could have talked with Seth & List #1
Seth .... could have talked with List #1
Most of List #1 .. could have talked with Noah
Noah .... could have talked with Shem & List #2
Part of List #1 ... could have talked with Shem
Shem .... could have talked with List #2, Abraham, & Isaac
Most of List #2 .. could have talked with Abraham
Part of List #2 ... could have talked with Isaac
Abraham .... could have talked with Isaac & Jacob
Isaac .... could have talked with Jacob & Joseph & his brothers

INTERESTING THOUGHTS ABOUT GENESIS 5 & 11

1. It helps semi-date Creation and disprove evolution to those who have ears to hear.

2. Adam could have talked about the Garden of Eden with all of the generations up to and including Lamech, the father of Noah.

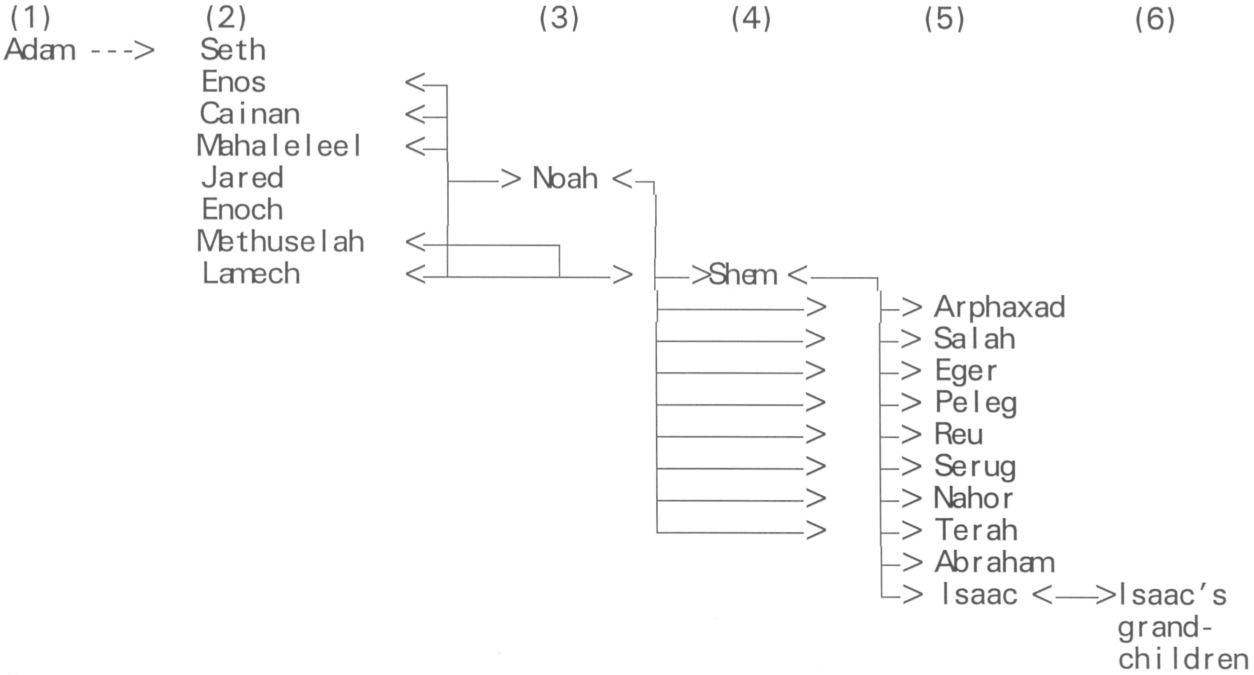
3. Noah could have talked with all direct ancestors (except Enoch) clear back to Enos.

4. Noah could have talked with all generations after him up to and including Terah the father of Abraham.

5. Abraham could have talked with all direct ancestors except Peleg and Nahor back to and incuding Shem, who went through the Flood.

6. Shem could have talked with all generations from Methuselah (his grandfather) down to Isaac (who came 10 generations after Shem).

NOTE: I AM AWARE THAT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY DID TALK TO THESE PEOPLE; I JUST SAY THAT THEY COULD HAVE TALKED TO THEM. "Could have" does not mean it actually happened -- it simply means that there was a possibility of its happenening and perhaps it did and perhaps it didn't, but it was physically possible.


(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)
(6)
Adam --->
Seth
Enos
Cainan
Mahaleleel
Jared
Enoch
Methuselah
Lamech
Noah
Shem
Arphaxad
Salah
Eger
Peleg
Reu
Serug
Nahor
Terah
Abraham
Isaac
Isaac's grand-children

In summary:
(1) Adam ---> (2) Methuselah or Lamech ---> (4) Shem ---> (5) Isaac ---> (6) Isaac's grandchildren

It would be like you (step 5) telling your grandchidren (step 6) about something that your grandmother (step 3) told you about something that her own grandmother (step 1) had told her!

My children all know some stories that I tell them. My grandfather (who used to live with us and who bought the house we now live in) used to tell stories to me. He had gotten some of them from his mother, father, uncle & grandmother (who live with them when Grandpa was a boy). One was details about the church meetings they used to have back in France when his own grandfather was the Baptist pastor and they had to meet secretly. And this was the reason they came to the New World, for religious freedom. And now my children hear fourth hand this story that is very real to me that happened about 150 years ago. When my grandchildren are a little older, whether I or my children will tell my grandchildren this story (and others). This is similar to how Isaac could have told stories about the Garden of Eden (or about talking person to person with God or about the Fall and the Expulsion from the Garden) to the children of Joseph and Levi and their brothers -- stories that he, Isaac, could have heard from Shem (who went through the Flood), who, in turn could have heard them from a man or many men who had talked to Adam himself!

From information given in the Bible we can safely say that Levi, one of the sons of Jacob, could have told the stories he got from his grandfather Isaac (whom he knew) to his own grandson Amram, who in turn could have told them to his son Moses. So that could make seven steps (see below) from Cration to the Law! (Again, I realize that we are speculating when we say that so-and-so could have talked to thus-and-so).

(1) Adam ---> (2) Methuselah or Lamech ---> (3) Shem ---> (4) Isaac ---> (5) ---> Kohath (Levi's son) ---> (6) Amram ---> (7) Moses

This is all just to show that there aren't many "jumps" in between Adam and Judah (the son of Jacob).

CHART: LENGTH OF THE FLOOD

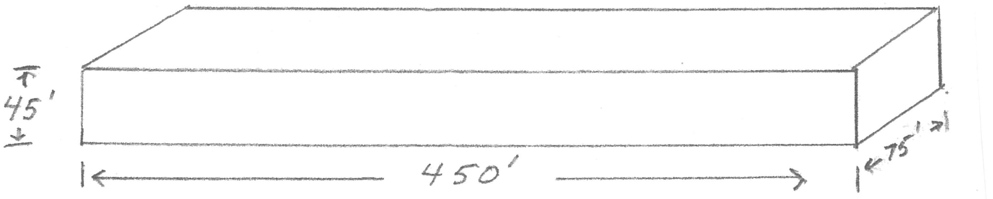
600th year of Noah's life (Gen. 7:11)

	month	day	
rains came	2	17	(Gen. 7:11)
ark ran aground	7	17	= 5 months from beginning of rains (Gen. 8:4)
mountains tops seen	10	1	= 2½ months more (Gen. 8:5)
ark cover removed	1	1	= 1 year minus 1½ months total so far (Gen. 8:13)

601st year

ground dry	2	27	= 1 year 10 days total (Gen. 8:14)

DIAGRAM OF THE ARK



Plus an 18" window somewhere, somehow
Plus a door
Plus some sort of covering
Also had 3 stories inside of it

LIFE OF ABRAHAM (BORN C. 2000 B.C.)

AGE	PLACE	EVENT	CHAPTER in GENESIS
	Ur	Born; first called by God (Acts 7:2-4)	11
75	Haran	Father dies	12
		God calls him to Canaan, blesses him, & gives him the promise (1st time).	
		Leaves Haran with wife Sarah & nephew Lot	
	Canaan	Famine comes, so travels to Egypt	
	Egypt	Uses deception about Sarah to Pharoah, who takes her; gives presents to Abram	
		God sends plagues to Egyptians, so Pharaoh discovers the truth. Abram leaves Egypt--richer	
	Canaan	Parts with Lot (who goes toward Sodom)	13
		God again gives him the promise (2nd)	
	Canaan	Rescues Lot from King Chedorleomar	14
		Is blessed by Melchizedek	
	Canaan	God gives him 3rd promise with divided animals' sacrifice	15
86	Canaan	Marries Hagar; has son Ishmael	16
99	Canaan	Abram & Sarai's names changed to Abraham & Sarah	17
		God gives 4th promise (including Isaac) & sign of circumcision	
	Canaan	Visited by 3 "men"; Sarah hears about Isaac	18
	Canaan	Sodom destroyed, but Lot saved	19
	Philistia	Travels to Gerar. Lies about Sarah to Abimelech, who takes her. God reveals deception in dream.	20

100	Philistia	Isaac born	21
		Ishmael & Hagar sent away; God's promise to Hagar.	
		Covenant with Abimelech	
	Canaan	Almost sacrifices Isaac	22
137	Canaan	Wife Sarah dies. Buys Cave of Machpelah to bury her	23
140	Canaan	Sends servant to Nahor for wife for Isaac	24
	Canaan	Marries Keturah; has 6 sons	25
		Gives Isaac inheritance; sends other sons away.	
160		Grandsons Jacob & Esau born	
175	Canaan	Dies. Buried by Isaac & Ishmael in Cave of Machpelah	

CHART: COMPARISON OF GOD'S COVENANTS WITH ABRAHAM

	Genesis 12	Genesis 13	Genesis 15	Genesis 17
Occasion:	Leave Haran for Canaan	Parts with Lot	Divided Sacrifice	---
Age:	75 years	---	@85 years	99 years
Concerning:				
Land:	1) go to land God shows ---(said a little later)---: 2) Land to be given to seed	1) Will get all land he can see 2) Land to Abram & his seed forever 3) Go explore your land	1) Same God as in Ur who brought Abram here to give him this land 2) Seed get land from River of Egypt to Euphrates	1) Will give Cannan to Abram & seed forever
Descendants:	1) Abram become great nation	1) Seed as dust, so many	1) Abram will have son 2) Seed as stars, so many 3) Seed: - strangers in land - serve them - afflicted - 400 years - that nation judged - leave rich - come here again in 4th generation	1) Abe multiplied greatly 2) Father of many nations 3) Have nations & kings 4) Son by Sarah next year 5) Name son "Isaac" 6) Covenant with Abram & Isaac & seed forever 7) Will be God to Abram & seed forever 8) Ishmael: - will also be blessed - many descendants - 12 princes - great nation
Personal:	1) God blesses Abram 2) Abram's name great 3) Abram be blessing 4) All world blessed in Abram 5) God blesses those who bless Abram 6) God curses those who curse Abram	---	1) God is Abram's shield & reward 2) Abram will die in peace 3) Abram will live long time	1) Abram must be upright before God 2) God institutes circumcision 3) Abram now Abraham 4) Sarai now Sarah - mother of nations - mother of kings

Life of Isaac (born c. 1900 B.C.)

AGE	PLACE	EVENT	CHAPTER in GENESIS
	Philistia	Born	21
3-5	Philistia	Weaned & brother Ishmael sent away	
		Almost sacrificed by father Abraham	22
40	Canaan	Marries Rebekah (3 yrs. after mother Sarah dies)	24
60	Canaan	Sons, Jacob & Esau, born	25
75		He & Ishmael bury bury father (Abraham) in Cave of Machpelah	
	Philistia	Famine in Canaan; goes to Gerat Caught by Abimelech in lie about wife. Digs wells. Peace treaty with Abimelech.	26
137	Canaan	Blind; tries to bless Esau but blesses Jacob instead	27
137	Canaan	Sends Jacob away to Haran to get a wife	28
c. 160	Canaan	Son Jacob returns with wives & 13 children	35
180		Dies; Jacob & Esau bury him in Cave of Machpelah	

LIFE OF JACOB (BORN C. 1840 B.C.)

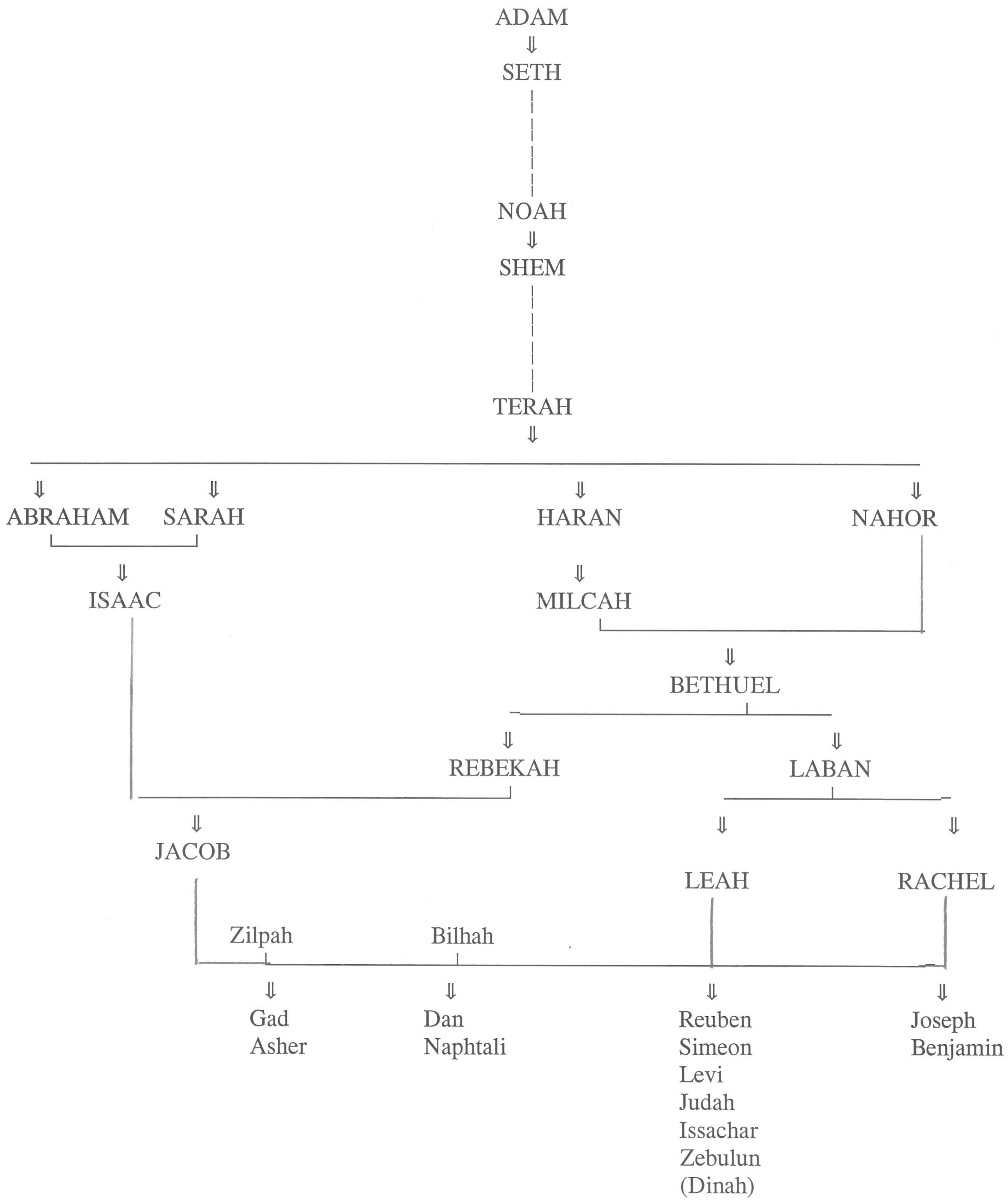
AGE	PLACE	EVENT	CHAPTER in GENESIS
	Canaan	Born	25
15		Grandfather Abraham dies before Jacob is 77 yrs.	
		Buys birthright from Esau for pottage	
77	Canaan	Gets blessing from blind Isaac by deception	27
77		Flees from Esau to Haran	28
	Bethel	Dream of ladder; gets blessing from God	
77-97	Haran	Marries Leah & Rachael (7 yrs. work each)	29
		Has 4 sons	
		Marries Bihah & Zilpah	30
		Has 7 more sons & 1 daughter	
		Works for & gets herds (6 yrs.)	
97		Leaves Laban with family & goods (Mizpah)	31
	Penuel	Wrestles with Angel	32
	Penuel	Meets Esau	33
	Shechem, Canaan	Dinah assaulted; avenged by Simeon & Levi	34
	Bethel, Canaan	Returns to Bethel as God had promised	35
	Bethleham, Canaan	Benjamin born & Rachael dies	
		Reuben dishonors father with Bilhah	
		Meets Isaac	
108	Canaan	Favors Joseph; Joseph "killed by animals"	37
@118		(Joseph put in jail by Potipher	39)
120	Canaan	He & Esau bury father, Isaac in Cave of Machpelah	35
@120		(Joseph, 30 yrs. old, stands before Pharoah)	41

128	Canaan	Famine comes to Canaan Sends 10 sons to Egypt for grain. Simeon kept as hostage in Egypt.	42
		Sends 9 sons + Benjamin for more grain	43
		Hears Joseph is alive	45
130	Egypt	Moves entire family to Egypt; meets Joseph	46
	Egypt	Meets Pharoah	47
147	Egypt	Blind; blesses Joseph's sons	48
		Blesses all sons; dies	49
	Canaan	Is buried in Cave of Machpelah with pomp	50

LIFE OF JOSEPH (BORN C. 1740 B.C.)

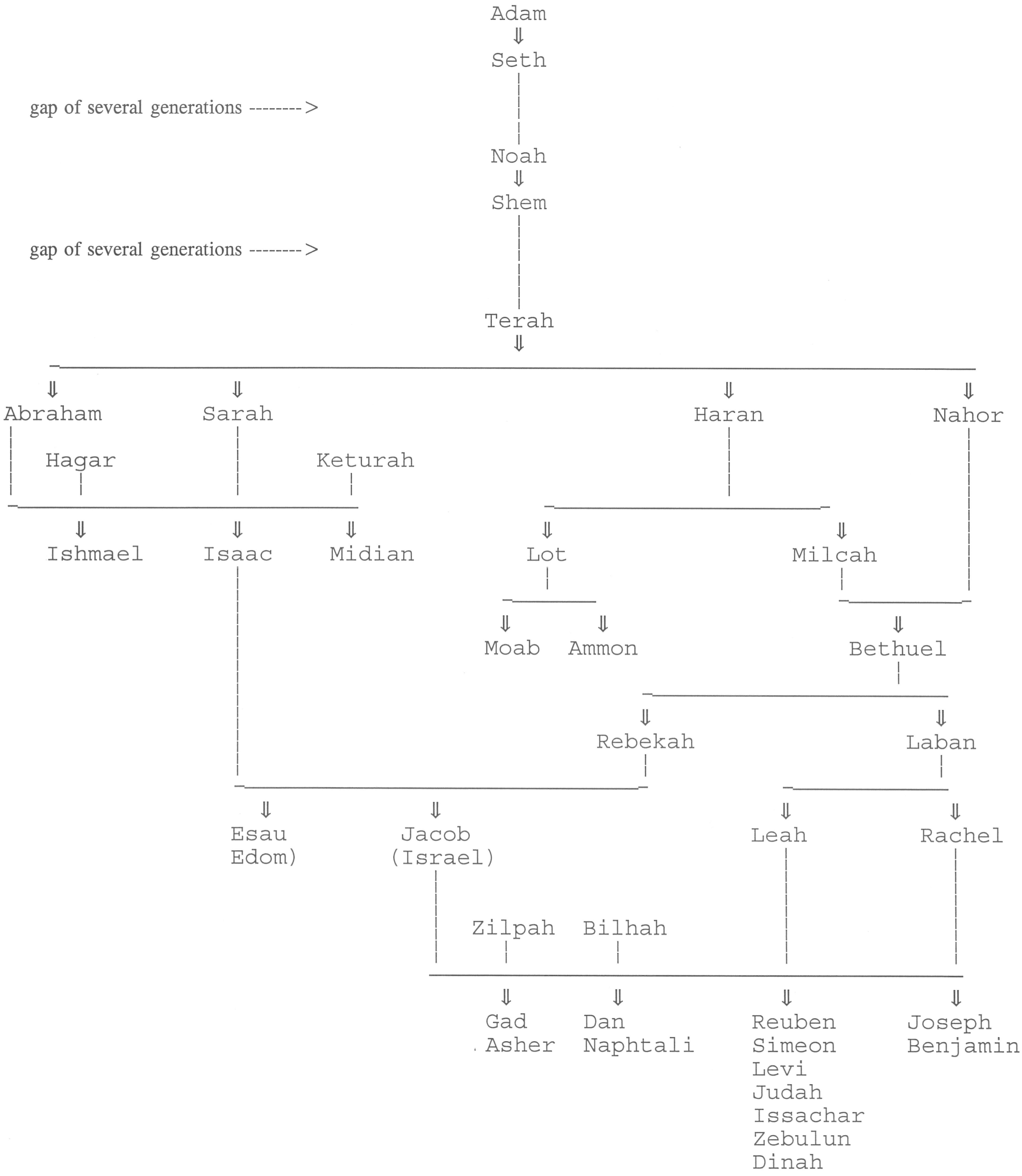
AGE	PLACE	EVENT	CHAPTER in GENESIS
	Haran	Born	30
	Canaan	Has dreams & tells family	37
		Sold by brothers to Midianites as slave	
	Egypt	Bought by Potiphar; becomes overseer of house	39
		Potophar's wife tries to seduce, lies about him	
		Thrown in prison; runs prison	
	Egypt	Interprets butler & baker's dreams in prison	40
		(Isaac dies during Joseph's time in prison)	
30	Egypt	Interprets dream of 7 yrs. plenty & famine for Pharoah	41
		Becomes 2nd in kingdom of Egypt, just below Pharoah	
	Egypt	Brothers come for food 1st time; Simeon jailed	42
39	Egypt	Brothers come for food 2nd time with Benjamin	43
		Puts cup in Benjamin's bag, chases, threatens	44
		Reveals himself to brothers; sends for father	45
39	Egypt	Meets father, Jacob	46
	Egypt	Presents father to Pharoah	47
		Settles father & brothers in good Egyptian pastureland	
		Obtains people & land of Egypt for Pharaoh	
	Egypt	Visits sick father who blesses Joseph & 2 sons	48
56	Egypt	Father (Jacob) blesses all sons & dies	49
56	Canaan	Buries father (Jacob) in Cave of Macpelah	50
	Egypt	Reassures brothers they're forgiven	
110	Egypt	Dies	
		Body in coffin awaiting when God returns them to Cannaan	

Genealogy of the 12 Patriarchs


ADAM
SETH
NOAH
SHEM
TERAH
ABRAHAM
SARAH
HARAN
NAHOR
ISAAC
MILCAH
BETHUEL
REBEKAH
LABAN
JACOB
LEAH
RACHEL
Zilpah
Bilhah
Gad
Asher
Dan
Naphtali
Reuben
Simeon
Levi
Judah
Issachar
Zebulun
(Dinah)
Joseph
Benjamin

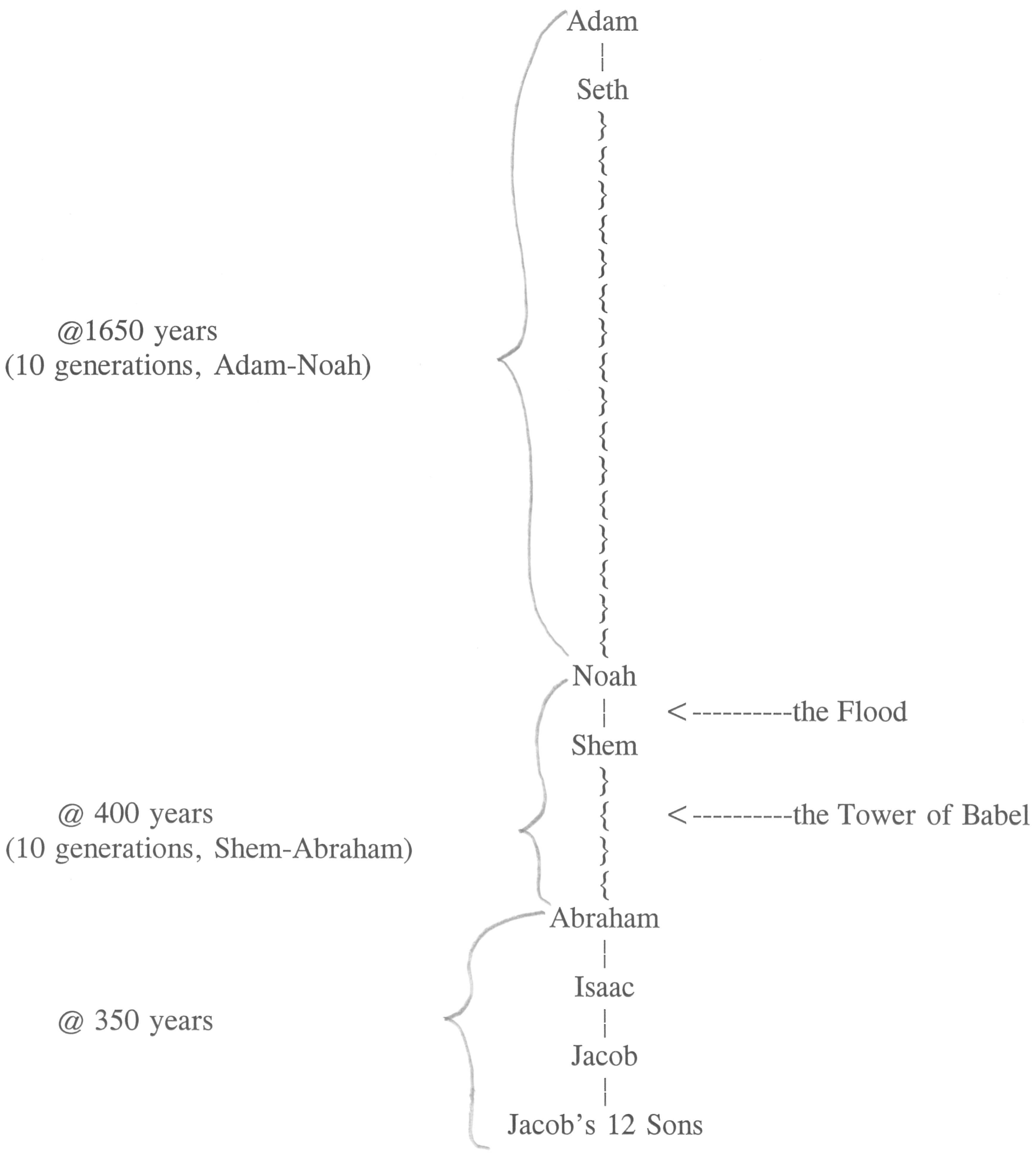
⇓ means a direct *father to son/daughter* relationship with no gaps
¦ means a direct ancestory with a *gap* of several generations

INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF TERAH'S DESCENDANTS


Adam
Seth
gap of several generations -------->
Noah
Shem
gap of several generations -------->
Terah
Abraham
Sarah
Haran
Nahor
Hagar
Keturah
Ishmael
Isaac
Midian
Lot
Milcah
Moab
Ammon
Bethuel
Rebekah
Laban
Esau
Edom)
Jacob
(Israel)
Leah
Rachel
Zilpah
Bilhah
Gad
Asher
Dan
Naphtali
Reuben
Simeon
Levi
Judah
Issachar
Zebulun
Dinah
Joseph
Benjamin

⇓ a direct *father to child* relationship without gaps

CHART: A VERY QUICK VISUAL OVERVIEW OF THE GENESIS GENEALOGY


Adam
Seth
Noah
Shem
Abraham
Isaac
Jacob
Jacob's 12 Sons
@1650 years
(10 generations, Adam-Noah)
@ 400 years
(10 generations, Shem-Abraham)
@ 350 years
<----------the Flood
<----------the Tower of Babel

| = one generation
} = more than one generation

Alphabetical List of Main People in Genesis

Abel	son of Adam & Eve; killed by brother Cain (Gen. 2)
Abimelech	(1) King of Gerar in Abraham's time (Gen. 20) (2) King of Gerar in Isaac's time (Gen. 26) [(3) Gideon's son who killed all his brothers -- Judges 9]
Abraham	father of Isaac & Ishmael, husband of Sarah; favored of God
Abram	Abraham's original name (Gen. 17:5)
Adam	first created man; husband of Eve; father of Cain, Abel, Seth, many others
Ammon	son of Lot by his younger daughter (Gen. 19:38)
Asher	2nd son of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, by Jacob (Gen. 30:13)
Asenath	Joseph's wife (Gen. 41:45)
Benjamin	2nd son of Rachel by Jacob (Gen. 35:18)
Bethuel	son of Nahor, father of Rebekah & Laban (Gen. 24:24, 29)
Bilhah	Rachel's handmaid; Jacob's concubine; mother of Dan & Naphtali (Gen. 30); Reuben lay with her (Gen. 49;4)
Cain	son of Adam & Eve; killed his brother Abel & was cursed by God
Canaan	younger son of Ham; cursed by Noah for Ham's disrespect (Gen. 9:25)
Dan	1st son of Rachel's handmaid, Bilhah, by Jacob (Gen. 30:6)
Deborah	(1) Rebekah's nurse (Gen. 35:8) [(2) prophetess & judge of Israel - Jg. 4]
Dinah	Jacob's only daughter, by Leah (Gen. 30:21)
Edom	"Red"; name Esau got when he sold his birthright for beans (Gen. 25:30)
Eliezer	of Damascus; Abram's heir before he had any children (Gen. 15:2)
Enoch	taken to Heaven without dying; father of Methuselah (Gen. 5:21-22)
Ephraim	Joseph's younger son; adopted by grandfather Jacob (Gen. 48)
Esau	Jacob's twin brother (Gen. 25:25); AKA Edom (Gen. 25:30)
Eve	Adam's wife; made from his rib; mother of Cain, Abel, Seth, many others
Gad	1st son of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, by Jacob (Gen. 30:11)
Hagar	Sarah's handmaid; Abraham's concubine; mother of Ishmael (Gen. 16)
Ham	Noah's youngest son; was disrespectful to drunken father (Gen. 9:22)
Haran	Brother of Abraham, father of Lot (Gen. 11:27)
Isaac	son of Abraham & Sarah; the "son of promise"; father of Jacob & Esau
Ishmael	son of Abraham & Hagar; half-brother of Isaac (Gen. 16)
Israel	name Jacob received when he wrestled with the angel (Gen. 32:28)
Issachar	5th son of Leah by Jacob (Gen. 30:18)
Jacob	"son of promise" of Isaac & Rebekah; father of the 12 patriarchs
Japheth	son of Noah; Caucasians descended from him (Gen. 10:2-5)

Joseph	favored son of Jacob by Rebekah; sold into Egypt by brothers; became prime minister of Egypt & saved family during famine (Gen. 37-47)
Judah	4th son of Jacob by Leah; ancestor of Messiah; father of twins by Tamar
Keturah	Abraham's wife after Sarah dies; 6 sons, including Midian (Gen. 25:1-4)
Laban	Rebekah's brother; Rachel's father; tricks Jacob with wives (Gen. 29)
Leah	Jacob's 1st wife; Laban's daughter; 6 sons & 1 daughter (Gen. 29-30)
Levi	Jacob's 3rd son by Leah; wiped out Shechem (Gen. 34); ancestor of priests
Lot	Abraham's nephew; father of Ammon & Moab by daughters (Gen. 19)
Manasseh	older son of Joseph; adopted by grandfather Jacob (Gen. 48)
Melchizedek	priest of Salem; blessed Abraham (Gen. 14:17-20)
Methuselah	oldest recorded man; Noah's grandfather; died year of Flood (Gen. 5:27)
Midian	one of Abraham's sons by Keturah (Gen. 25:2)
Milcah	daughter of Haran; wife of Nahor (Abraham's brother) (Gen. 24:15)
Moab	son of Lot by his older daughter (Gen. 19:37)
Nahor	Abraham brother; grandfather of Rebekah & Laban (Gen. 24:15)
Naphtali	2nd son of Rachel's handmaid, Bilhah, by Jacob (Gen. 30:8)
Noah	godly man who built ark & was saved with family in the Flood; ancestor of everyone alive today (Gen. 6-9)
Pharoah	king of Egypt; had dream & raised Jospeh to prime minister (Gen.41)
Pharez	Son of Judah by daughter-in-law, Tamar; ancestor of Messiah (Gen. 38)
Potipher	officer of Pharoah, captain of guard, who bought Joseph (Gen. 39:1)
Potipherah	Joseph's father-in-law (??? Potipher ???) (Gen. 41:45)
Rachel	Jacob's beloved wife mother of Joseph & Benjamin (Gen. 29)
Rebekah	Isaac's wife; Laban's sister; mother of Jacob & Esau (Gen. 25:20-26)
Reuben	1st son of Jacob by Leah (Gen. 29:35); lay with Bilhah (Gen. 49:4)
Sarah	wife (& half-sister) of Abraham (Gen. 20:5); mother of Isaac (Gen.21)
Sarai	Sarah's original name (Gen. 17:15)
Seth	Adam & Eve's son to replace the slain Abel (Gen. 4:25)
Shechem	raped Dinah; killed with whole town by Simeon & Levi (Gen. 34)
Shem	Noah's son; Jews (& other Semites) descended from him (Gen. 10:21-31)
Simeon	2nd son of Jacob by Leah; he & Levi wiped out Shechem's town (Gen. 34)
Tamar	daughter-in-law of Judah; has twins (Pharez & Zarah) by Judah; ancestress of the Messiah through Pharez (Gen. 38)
Terah	father of Abraham, Sarah, Haran, & Nahor (Gen. 11:27; 20:12)
Zaphnathpaaneah	name given to Joseph by Pharaoh (Gen. 41:45)
Zarah	twin brother of Pharez, son of Tamar by Judah (Gen. 38:30)
Zebulun	6th son of Leah by Jacob (Gen. 30:20)
Zilpah	Leah's handmaid; concubine of Jacob; mother of Gad and Asher (Gen 30)

List of "Stories" in Genesis with Locations

(Genesis covers from Creation to the death of Joseph in Egypt, almost 2400 yrs.)

- 1-2 . . . . . . Creation
- 3 . . . . The Fall of Man by eating the forbidden fruit
- 4 . . . . Cain kills Abel
- 6-9 . . . . . . Noah & the Flood
- 11 . . . . . . Tower of Babel
- 11-25 . . . . Life of Abraham
  - 14 . . . . . . rescues Lot; meets Melchizedek
  - 13, 20 . . . deceives kings concerning Sarah
  - 22 . . . . . . faith tested with Isaac
- 16, 21 . . . . Hagar & Ishmael
- 19 . . . . . . Lot, Sodom & Gomorrah
- 21-28 . . . . Life of Isaac
  - 24 . . . . . . marries Rebekah
- 25-50 . . . . Life of Jacob
  - 25 . . . . . . gets birthright for pottage
  - 27 . . . . . . gets blessing by trickery
  - 29 . . . . . . marries Leah & Rachel
  - 32 . . . . . . wrestles with angel; named changed to Israel
  - 34 . . . . . . Dinah raped; avenged
  - 46 . . . . . . enters Egypt with family
  - 38-49 . . . . adopts Joseph's son; blesses son; dies
- 38 . . . . . . Judah & Tamar
- 37-50 . . . . Life of Joseph
  - 37 . . . . . . sold as slave
  - 41 . . . . . . interprets Pharaoh's dream
  - 42-45 . . . . brothers buy food in Egypt
  - 50 . . . . . . buries father Jacob in Canaan; dies

CHAPTER BY CHAPTER OVERVIEW OF GENESIS

(a period of about 2400 yrs., approx. 4000 - 1600 B.C.)
(50 Chapters)

CHAPTER	EVENTS
1	Creation.
2	Review of Creation. Garden of Eden. Details on Creation of Adam & Eve.
3	The Fall. Expulsion from Garden of Eden.
4	Birth of Cain & Abel. Cain murders Abel. Descendants of Cain.
5	Genealogies from Adam to Noah.
6	God decides to destroy evil men with the Flood. Warns Noah & gives instructions for ark & animals to take.
7	Noah & family enter ark. (This happens about 1650 yrs. after Creation [about 2450 B.C.]) The Flood comes.
8	Flood continues then recedes. Noah leaves ark & sacrifices. (They were in ark a little over a year.)
9	God blesses Noah & gives covenant with rainbow as sign. Ham's disrespect to his father. Noah curses Canaan.
10	Descendants of Shem, Ham, & Japheth & where they lived.
11	Tower of Babel. (somewhere between approx. 2400 - 2200 B.C.) Genealogies from Shem to Abram (Abraham). Abram & family go from Ur to Haran.
12	God calls Abram (75 yrs. old) & gives 1st blessing. Abram travels to land of Canaan. (This is about 2000 yrs. after Creation and also about 2000 B.C.)

Famine, so Abram goes to Egypt.
Tries to deceive Pharoah regarding Sarah, his wife.

13 Abram returns to Canaan.
So many herds, Abram parts with nephew Lot (who goes toward Sodom).
God gives Abram 2nd promise.

14 Abram rescues Lot from King Chedorleomar.
Meets & is blessed by Melchizedek.

15 God gives promise 3rd time with divided animals' sacrifice.

16 Abram (86 yrs. old) marries Hagar & has son Ishmael.

17 God gives promises 4th time (including Isaac's birth) to Abram (99 yrs.).
God changes Abram's name to Abraham.
God gives sign of circumcision, which Abraham obeys.

18 Abraham visited by & feeds 3 "men" (the Lord & 2 angels).
Sarah hears promise of Isaac & laughs.
Abraham bargains with God about destruction of Sodom.

19 Lot is hospitable to 2 "men" (the angels).
Sodom destroyed, but Lot & 2 daughters saved.
Made drunk by daughters, Lot fathers a son by each daughter.

20 Abraham travels to Gerar in Philistia.
Lies about Sarah to King Abimelech, who takes her.
Deception revealed by God in dream.

21 Birth is Isaac (Abraham is 100 yrs., Sarah 90 yrs old).
Ishmael & Hagar sent away; God gives promises to Hagar.
Abraham makes covenant with Abimelech.

22 (Somewhere in here Abraham returns to Canaan.)
God tells Abraham to sacrifice Isaac.
God provides a ram instead of Isaac.
God gives promises 5th time.

23 Sarah, wife of Abraham, dies.
Abraham (137 yrs. old) buys Cave of Machpelah to bury Sarah.

24 Abraham (140 yrs.) sends servant to brother Nahor for wife (Rebekah) for Isaac (40 yrs.).

25 Abraham marries Keturah & has 6 sons.
Abraham gives Isaac everything & sends Keturah's sons away with gifts.

Abraham's death (at 175 yrs.) & burial in Cave of Machpelah by Isaac & Ishmael is
recorded here (though it happens later in the narrative).
Ishmael's sons are named.
Isaac (60 yrs. old) & Rebekah have twins, Jacob & Esau.
Esau sells birthright to Jacob for meal of red lentils & bread.

26 Famine in Canaan; Isaac goes to Gerar, Philistia.
Isaac lies to Abimelech about wife Rebekah & is caught in lie.
Isaac digs wells & has disputes over them with herdsmen of Gerar.
Peace covenant with Abimelech.

27 (Somewhere in here Isaac returns to Canaan.)
Blind Isaac (137 yrs) tries to give blessing to Esau.
Jacob (about 77 yrs.), by trickery, gets it instead.
Esau plans to kill Jacob after father Isaac dies.

28 Isaac sends Jacob to Nahor to get non-Canaanite wife.
At Bethel, Jacob has dream of "ladder" to heaven; God speaks to him.

29 Jacob meets cousin Rachel & uncle Laban & falls in love.
After working 7 years for Rachel, Jacob is given her sister Leah.
Jacob marries Rachel a week later & works 7 more years for her.
Leah has 4 sons.

30 Childless Rachel gives Bilhah to Jacob for a wife & has 2 sons by her.
Leah gives Zilpah to Jacob for a wife & has 2 sons by her.
Leah has 2 more sons & 1 daughter.
Rachel has son, Joseph.
Jacob works 6 more years for herds (making a total of 20 yrs. of work).

31 Laban gets jealous & becomes unfriendly.
Jacob (about 97 yrs.) leaves with family & herds after God tells him to.
Rachel steals father Laban's "gods".
Laban chases after them, is warned by God.
Laban & Jacob make a peace agreement (Mizpah)

32 Jacob sends word to Esau who starts coming with 400 men.
Jacob sends gifts to Esau.
Jacob wrestles all night with the Lord & is crippled.
Jacob's name changed to Israel (prince of God).

33 Esau & Jacob meet -- all is friendly.

34 Dinah assaulted by Shechem, who then wants to marry her.
Shechem bargains with Jacob & sons for Dinah, agreeing to circumcision.
Simeon & Levi wipe out town of Shechem, stealing goods.

35 God tells Jacob to go to Bethel.
Jacob has everyone get rid of heathen things.
They go to Bethel & God blesses Jacob.
Rachel gives birth to Benjamin at Bethlehem & dies.
Reuben lies with Bilhah, his father's concubine.
Jacob comes home to Isaac.
Tells of Isaac's death at 180 yrs. (though it's really later in narrative).

36 Lists Esau's sons, grandsons, & other people of Mt. Seir area.

37 Jacob (approx. 108 yrs.) favors Joseph (17 yrs.); gives him coat of many colors.
Joseph's dreams (producing more hatred from his brothers).
Joseph's brothers sell him as slave to Egypt.

38 Judah's 2 sons die; he doesn't give daughter-in-law to 3rd son.
Judah has twins by daughter-in-law, Tamar.

39 Joseph bought by Potipher, blessed by God, & favored by Potipher.
Potipher's wife fails in seduction of Joseph, so lies about him.
Potipher throws Joseph in prison.
Keeper of prison has Joseph run prison.

40 Pharaoh's butler & baker thrown in prison, have dreams.
Joseph interprets dreams correctly.

41 Pharaoh has dreams, Joseph interprets them as 7 yrs. plenty & 7 famine.
Pharaoh makes Joseph (30 yrs.) head over Egypt, 2nd only to Pharaoh.
Pharaoh gives Joseph a wife.
Joseph has 2 sons.
7 years of plenty come.
7 years of famine begin.

42 Jacob sends 10 sons to Egypt to buy food.
Joseph knows them & speaks roughly, finding out about family.
Joseph jails Simeon & tells them they can't come back without Benjamin.
Brothers return to father but find money in grain sacks.

43 Famine worse, but Jacob's sons refuse to go to Egypt without Benjamin.
They take Benjamin & go.
Joseph has them over for dinner.

44 Joseph returns money in sacks again + his silver cup in Benjamins.
Brothers leave, Joseph chases after them.
Judah offers to be slave if Benjamin released.

45 Joseph reveals himself to scared brothers & sends for father Jacob.

46	God tells Jacob to take family & go to Egypt. Jacob's family of 70 listed. Joseph meets father Jacob.
47	Jacob (130 yrs.) meets Pharaoh who gives them best of land. During famine, Joseph buys up all of Egypt for Pharoah.
48	Dying Jacob (147 yrs.) calls Joseph & takes grandsons for his own.
49	Dying Jacob calls sons & blesses them prophetically. Jacob dies (147 yrs.)
50	Egypt mourns for Jacob 70 days. Joseph takes impressive funeral procession to Canaan. Jacob buried in Cave of Machpelah. Frightened brothers beseech Joseph (who long ago had forgiven all!). Joseph dies (110 yrs.) (about 1600 B.C.), after telling relatives to take his body with them when God fulfills promise to return them to Canaan.

There is about a 65-80 year gap between Joseph's death and the beginning of Exodus, the next book in the Bible.

Synopsis of
Book of Genesis

Chapter #	Events Covered	Chap. Used	Approx.# of Yrs. Covered	Total Ch. Used
*1-8	Creation to Flood	8	1660}	
9-11	Post-Flood to Abraham	3	440} 2000	11
12-24	Life of Abraham	13}		
25-27	Life of Isaac	3}		
28-36	Life of Jacob	9}	400	39
37-50	Life Of Joseph	14}		
1-50	TOTAL		2400 yrs.	50 chapters

*Breakdown of First 8 Chapters
of Book of Genesis

Chapter #	Events Covered	Chap. Used	Approx.# of Yr.s Covered	Total Ch. Used
1-3	Creation to Fall	3}		
4	Cain & Abel	1}		
5	Genealogies	1}	1660 yrs.	8 chap.
6-8	Noah & Flood	3}		

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